**Eastern Michigan University**
## DigitalCommons@EMU

Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations

Master's Theses, and Doctoral Dissertations, and Graduate Capstone Projects

2006

# Senior women leaders in higher education overcoming barriers to success

Nan-Chi Tiao

Follow this and additional works at: http://commons.emich.edu/theses

Part of the Higher Education and Teaching Commons

SENIOR WOMEN LEADERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SUCCESS


Nan-Chi Tiao


Dissertation


Submitted to the Department of Leadership and Counseling
Eastern Michigan University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of


DOCTOR OF EDUCATION


Dissertation Committee

Martha W. Tack, PhD, Chair

Helen Ditzhazy, PhD

April Flanagan, EdD

Patrick Melia, PhD

Ellen Hoffman, EdD,

Graduate School Representative


June 19, 2006

Ypsilanti, Michigan

APPROVAL

SENIOR WOMEN LEADERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

by

Nan-Chi Tiao

APPROVED:

| | |
|---|---|
| Martha W. Tack, PhD | Date |
| Dissertation Chair | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Helen Ditzhazy, PhD | Date |
| Committee Member | |

| | |
|---|---|
| April Flanagan, EdD | Date |
| Committee Member | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Patrick Melia, PhD | Date |
| Committee Member | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Ellen Hoffman, EdD | Date |
| Graduate School Representative | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Jaclynn Tracy, PhD | Date |
| Department Head | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Robert O. Holkeboer, PhD | Date |
| Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies and Research | |

DEDICATION


To

my mother,

Shin-Yun Tang,

a dedicated, beloved wife, mother, and teacher

who passed away during the course of my doctoral study,

and my father,

Chin-Lung Tiao,

who never expects less of his daughters.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the heavenly Father whose love, grace, and blessings made this pursuit possible. Indeed, I am blessed not only with a group of strong, supportive faculty members but also with a loving family and friends who accompanied me through this unforgettable journey.

First, to my dissertation chair and mentor, Dr. Tack, I express my heartfelt thankfulness. Without her advocacy, endorsement, and support, I would not be able to get this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to interview so many outstanding women leaders in American higher education and finish this research project. Without her guidance and high standards, this work would not be what it is now. My appreciation extends to my committee members: Dr. Ditzhazy, Dr. Flanagan, Dr. Melia, and Dr. Hoffman for their constant encouragement and assistance.

I would also like to thank all the women presidents, vice presidents, and senior executives who graciously took time out of their busy schedules to share their stories with me. May their wisdom, experiences, insights, and advice benefit all who read this dissertation. To my dissertation support group members, Minta, Deb, Pam, Cheryl, and to Kevin and Kathy Brandon, thank you for your collegial fellowship and unreserved support.

Last but not least, I want to thank my husband, Shu-Chi, my best comrade, for his unfailing love, companionship, and support all these years. To my daughters, Jill and Jean, thank you for your sweet love, patience, and understanding. To friends from church: Kwan-Ling, Shan-Chy, and Lois, your friendships and loving deeds in Christ will be remembered dearly.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to obtain a deeper understanding of what it takes for women to succeed as cabinet-level higher education administrators. The findings not only offer a wealth of strategies for career success and for overcoming professional and personal challenges, but also shed new light on critical factors that affect women' experiences at work.

This qualitative, phenomenological study was based primarily on confidential interviews with nine senior women leaders. Two informants are presidents, six are vice presidents, and one serves as a senior executive officer of their universities. Before assuming their current posts, they worked in a variety of leadership capacities ranging from department head to president at various institutions. All interviews were transcribed verbatim, analyzed, and compared for salient themes. To ensure the credibility of this research endeavor, triangulation was used by incorporating all informants and an independent outside auditor to validate the accuracy, objectivity, and plausibility of the results drawn from this study.

Six major themes emerged from this research: effective leadership strategies: earning your place at the table; tests and trials; maintaining focus and political savvy; numbers matter: the rules change; gender as a two-edged sword; and competing as a woman: prepared and ready. The results revealed that to succeed as top-level executives, women must constantly overachieve, maintain good relationships with others, hold onto personal and institutional values to do the right things, expand themselves constantly, and utilize strong mentors' assistance as well as sponsorship. When faced with implicit and explicit challenges such as unequal treatment, gender bias, resistance, political joggling, or personal struggles, they rely on private confrontation, emotional intelligence, and tenacity, as well as all possible support and resources to survive and thrive.

The most important finding was the contrast between women leaders' token experiences versus their experiences as an equal social group in leadership teams. The results confirmed Kanter's (1993) theory about the impact of the proportion of women on management culture and on individual leaders' experiences. Obviously, placing more women in powerful leadership positions will foster a more diversified, inclusive management culture and improve executive women leaders' experiences at work.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Given the increasingly competitive and challenging environments facing higher education in the 21st century, "American colleges and universities need all the good leadership they can get…. Why . . . should any board of university trustees seeking a president look only at the 49 percent of the population who are men" (Fretwell, 1991, p. ix)? Moreover, representatives from nine prestigious institutions of higher learning (i.e., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, California Institute of Technology, Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, Yale, Pennsylvania, University of Michigan, and California-Berkeley) called for greater utilization of women's talents, particularly in academic science and engineering. Together they stressed that "Institutions of higher education have an obligation, both for themselves and for the nation, to fully develop and utilize all the creative talent available" (MIT, 2001, p. 1).

Such statements revealed not only these leaders' concerns for American higher education's future development and its lack of inclusion of women's talents, but also their beliefs in the connection between the system's abiding strength and its full utilization of women. Indeed, because of some pioneer women leaders' success as well as scholars' (Eagly & Carli, 2003; Helgesen, 1990; Nidiffer, 2001b) advocacy of "the female advantage," more institutions have started using women as senior decision-makers. Every time a woman was chosen for a historically male position, special attention and scrutiny from the media was automatic. While the media and many people tend to overestimate women's success in higher education, a closer look at their experiences at work as well as the makeup of the positions women occupy often reveal a different story.

Acker (1992), for instance, stated, "In all institutions that have been developed by and are dominated by men, women hold subordinate positions" (p. 567). Institutions of higher learning are no exception. As the major beneficiaries of the male-dominated higher education system since the beginning, men usually find it natural and easy to fit into the academic environment. Most of them often have difficulty recognizing that the academy is not as gender neutral as they think, not to mention putting themselves in women's positions. Consequently, gender-biased language was not removed from the "Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure" by the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges until 1990 (O'Neil, 1999).

For women who must compete with men for survival, recognition, or promotions, the often unchallenged traditional standards have proved to be problematic. For instance, women leaders have suffered from problems such as narrowly defined leader image, gender stereotypes, double standards, exclusion from informal networks, negative attitudes and "chilly climate," and lack of work-related assistance or mentoring (Benokraitis, 1998; Bond, 2000; Bower, 1993; Carli, 1998; Chliwniak, 1997; Collins, 1998; Currie & Thiele, 2001; Curry, 2000; Dietz, 1997; English, 2000; Growe & Montgomery, 1999; Guteck, 2001; Harter, 1993; Jablonski, 1996; Johnsrud, 1991; Marshall, 1979, 1984; McGuire, 2002; Munford & Rumball, 2000; Ronning, 2000; Rusch & Marshall, 1995; Sandler, 1986; Shakeshaft, 1999; Stokes, 1984; Sturnick, 1999; Tedrow & Rhoads, 1998; Wheeler & Tack, 1989). Consequently, Zemsky (2001) avowed,

> Higher education's challenge is to develop a culture that yields to women the same recognition and rewards that it has always yielded to men – and to do so in such a way that the result is a wide variety of roles, responsibilities, and models of leadership reflective of the gender diversity that has come to characterize the academy. (p. 2)

Moreover, the underutilization of women's strengths and talents impedes not only women's contributions to their institutions but also American higher education's vitality and development.

## Statement of the Problem

Since American higher education opened its doors to women in 1855, women have gradually gained access to all aspects of higher education in that they are represented as students, faculty, and staff (Chliwniak, 1997; Glazer-Raymo, 2002; Nidiffer, 2002, 2003; Solomon, 1985; Thelin, 2004). However, according to American Council on Education's (ACE, 2002) statistics, the system remains male-dominated with 79% of the presidents being men. Women continue to be disproportionately underrepresented as senior decision-makers even though they have been higher education's major undergraduate clientele for more than 25 years (Nidiffer, 2001a; U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

Even after women enter the predominantly male upper echelon in the academy, where male norms and practices have been the "taken for granted" standards, they face the pressure of "fitting in" and adapting to the masculine leader image and management culture (Kanter, 1980, 1993). Unlike their male counterparts, women leaders face the additional requirement of coping with cultural expectations of being "feminine" while projecting a masculine leader image (Cantor & Bernay, 1992; Kellerman, 2003; Mandel, 2003; Powell & Graves, 2003; Rhode, 2003; Ropers-Huilman, 1998; Zemsky, 2001). The problem is that such unchallenged, contradictory roles and expectations benefit men more than women. Continual improvement of higher education, nevertheless, relies on the utilization of all the best possible leadership and talents available (Fretwell, 1991; MIT, 2001). The absence of women senior leaders in higher education institutions not only causes alienation, frustration, and

marginalization, but it also makes retention and recruitment of future women leaders more difficult (Cook, 2001; Konrad & Pfeffer, 1991; Kulis, 1997; Tinsley, 1986; Walton & McDade, 2001).

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was twofold. First, obstacles experienced by senior women leaders as they strive for career success in public 4-year institutions were identified. Second, strategies employed by selected women leaders to overcome various challenges or obstacles in their paths to success were explored. The focus was on female insiders' views on women in leadership positions and the subjective meanings attached to these lived experiences. The study aimed at uncovering reasons behind women leaders' success, particularly their ways of handling difficult situations encountered in their professional and personal life, so that valuable lessons and advice can be learned from their success stories for the benefit of other current or aspiring leaders.

## Significance of the Study

This dissertation study was needed and important for the following reasons. First, studies on leaders or leadership theories in higher education have traditionally been focused on male subjects (Bolman & Deal, 1992; Mark, 1981; Stokes, 1984). When compared with their male counterparts, women leaders in higher education have received much less attention in the literature. As outstanding as they can be, successful women leaders' stories are less documented, and their voices are less heard. Due to the continuous lack of knowledge about pioneering women leaders in higher education, scholars have called for more studies focusing on senior women leaders' practices and experiences so that not only new knowledge about women leaders can be gained but also aspiring leaders can benefit from their success

stories (Allen, 1986; Bond, 2000; Etaugh, 1986; Mark, 1981; Moore, 1984; Munford & Rumball, 2000; Walton & McDade, 2001).

Second, after conducting a comprehensive literature review on women leaders in higher education, this researcher found that most previous works focused on demographic data or career paths of executive women leaders. ACE (2002); Gerdes (2003); Milley (1991); Moore (1984); and Walton and McDade (2001), for instance, provided a wide range of background information about women serving in senior leadership positions. Their findings, nonetheless, can not solve the puzzle of how and why these women managed to break through the "glass ceiling" in academia. Although some works addressed the issues of barriers to and strategies for success for women in higher education leadership, most of them were opinion- or sharing-pieces that were not based on scholarly research (Cook, 2001; Dickson, 2000; Growe & Montgomery, 1999; Guteck, 2001; Marshall, 2002). As to qualitative inquiries (Cline, 1996; Dietz, 1997; Flanagan, 2002; Rosynsky, 2002; Sturnick, 1999; Tedrow & Rhoads, 1999; Thompson-Stacy, 1995; Zakery, 1991), while the findings focused on relevant issues with more depth and meaning, they were generally limited to certain geographical areas or to specific types of institutions. Thus, additional studies need to be conducted so that a more complete picture about what it takes for women to achieve and remain in senior leadership posts in higher education can be constructed.

Third, according to the literature, mentors and role models for women in academia are scarce. Reasons for the shortage of mentors included lack of women in top leadership positions, hesitation of male leaders to mentor women, the unwillingness of the "queen bee" to assist other women, and lack of time and energy for mentoring (Anderson & Ramey, 1990; Bower, 1993; Braun, 1990; Scanlong, 1997). Therefore, the task of preserving detailed

success stories of current senior women leaders becomes not only necessary but also important so that current and aspiring women leaders can, at least, learn from these examples when they have no place to turn.

Fourth, the gendered socialization process has encouraged females to play the supportive and nurturing roles instead of the competitive and aggressive roles, not to mention being trained to master skills needed to play political games in the workplace (Acker, 1992; Babcock & Laschever, 2003; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1982; Jablonski, 1996; Kimmel, 2004). Albino (1992) and Thompson-Stacy (1995), for instance, found that women tend to perceive politics negatively and, thus, feel uncomfortable talking about politics or strategies. However, together with Cantor and Bernay (1992), they contended that for women to succeed as senior leaders in the political environment of higher education, being politically astute was an inevitable and indispensable requirement. Therefore, the current study was needed so that more aspiring women leaders have an opportunity to understand the political nature of higher education as well as to learn practical lessons from those who have already mastered the art of politics.

Fifth, women cannot passively rely on affirmative action or institutional intervention programs to improve their status in the profession. The best way to eliminate irrelevant gender-based challenges is to acquaint current and aspiring women leaders with strategies learned from women who have already achieved success in top leadership positions within the academy (Bond, 2000; Chamberlain, 2001; Flanagan, 2002; Mark, 1981; Ronning, 2000). By examining both the problems and the solutions in depth, this researcher intends to identify both positive and negative factors that affect women leaders' experiences in higher education. The findings of this study will not only add to the knowledge base about senior

women leaders in selected public four-year universities but will also provide aspiring leaders with various practical alternatives for overcoming different obstacles in their career paths.

Overview of the Research Methodology

This phenomenological study was limited to information obtained from two-hour recorded personal interviews with nine women presidents, vice presidents, or senior executives currently serving in public four-year universities in a selected state in the United States. Women associated with the American Council on Education's Office of Women Leaders in Higher Education and one of its national networks for women leaders in higher education helped the researcher identify and invite participants suitable for this research endeavor. Once permission was granted, an invitation letter (Appendix I) and an Informed Consent Form (Appendix II), together with the Interview Guide (Appendix III), were sent to each participant. This researcher acted as the primary research instrument to collect data through open-ended interview questions. To ensure the clarity and effectiveness of the attached interview guide, the researcher pilot tested it with two senior women leaders before entering the field for further exploration.

Throughout the entire research process, the anonymity of both the informants and their affiliated organizations was closely guarded. All names that might expose the identities of the participants or their institutions were replaced with pseudonyms. Moreover, the code list, interview tapes, research data, and other sensitive materials were handled carefully and kept under lock and key at the researcher's home. Once the project is completed, all materials will be destroyed or erased immediately.

To ensure internal validity, all participants were invited to review and confirm findings drawn in the study. If the results did not reflect accurately the participants'

perceptions, the researcher negotiated with the participants until agreements were reached. For external validity and credibility of the study, with the approval of the dissertation chair, the researcher invited an external investigator with doctoral-level training and experiences in conducting qualitative inquiry to double-check the research findings. This external investigator reviewed a sample of the interview transcripts and compared them against the emerging themes and interpretations to validate the credibility of the study. Similarly, if there were disagreements, the two negotiated until proper adjustments were made.

## Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to information contained in the success stories of nine top-level women leaders serving in public four-year universities in a selected state of the United States. The focus was on these successful women's lived experiences and their views on reasons behind their success as well as issues facing women in higher education administration. Since only a small sample of senior women leaders was included, the findings and outcomes cannot be generalized to women serving in other types of higher education institutions or all women in higher education administration. Moreover, the richness of the results relied on the researcher's interview skills as well as the participants' openness and willingness to disclose, reflect, and analyze different aspects of both their positive and negative experiences in the profession.

## Definition of Terms

Important terms used in the study were defined as follows:

1. Access discrimination: bias that "bars access into an occupation based on a presumably irrelevant characteristic" (Golombok & Fivush, 1994, p. 201).

2.	At-will administrator: an administrator who does not have union or contract protection and thus can be released by the institution at any time.

3.	Barrier:  difficult situation or condition that hinders progress or achievement of an objective.

4.	Gender stereotype: "a set of beliefs about what it means to be female or male" (Golombok & Fivush, 1994, p. 17).

5.	Higher education: a public four-year university in the United States.

6.	The "queen bee" phenomena: A situation that "suggests there is only room for one outstanding woman in an organization and that each other woman must fight her way to the top just as the 'queen bee' did" (Bower, 1993, p. 93).

7.	Senior leaders: top-level executives including "president, chancellor, vice presidents, provosts, deans or their equivalents" (Twombly & Rosser, 2002, p. 459).

8.	Strategy: "a complex web of thoughts, ideas, insights, experiences, goals, expertise, memories, perceptions, and expectations that provides general guidance for specific actions in pursuit of particular ends" (Nickols, 2000, p. 6).

9.	Success: being able to achieve cabinet-level positions and to remain successful in those positions.

10.	Tokenism: "The term refers to individuals who make up less than 15 percent of an entire group" (Nelson & Burke, 2000, p. 111).

Organization of the Study

This dissertation will be organized into six chapters. The first chapter includes the introduction and background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, an overview of the research methodology, limitations of the study, definition of terms, and organization of the dissertation. Chapter Two focuses on a review of relevant literature on historical and socio-cultural contexts for women in higher education, women presidents and vice presidents; barriers to success for senior women leaders in higher education; strategies used by women leaders to overcome barriers to success; and a concluding remarks. The research design, site and participant selection, guiding research questions, and research procedures are discussed in Chapter Three. Research data and findings are presented in Chapter Four and Chapter Five. Chapter Four incorporates a composite profile of the nine senior women leaders in the study as well as individual profiles. Chapter Five focuses on salient themes that emerged from the nine in-depth personal interviews. Chapter Six begins with a summary of the study together with conclusions as well as discussion of major findings and contributions of the study to the literature and ends with recommendations for action and further study.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

As Harvard scholar Deborah Rhode (1997) contended,

> Americans' most common response to gender inequity is to deny its dimensions. A widespread perception is that once upon a time, women suffered serious discrimination, but those days are over. Barriers have been coming down, women have been moving up, and full equality is just around the corner. (p. 3)

To her, the "no problem" problem has prevented most Americans from perceiving "gender inequality as a serious problem" (p 2). Nidiffer (2002) concurred and called for "cautious optimism" (p. 3) because women have not reached parity in higher education yet. She found women struggling, particularly in the more "prestigious" institutions and areas of professional studies, such as dentistry, law, medicine, science, and engineering, as well as in graduate programs of research universities. The recent controversial comments made by former Harvard President Laurence Summers about women's biological difference in their lack of ability to handle mathematics and science provided the best example of how even in the $21^{st}$ century, the fallacy of women's intellectual inferiority still exists in some modern and highly educated people's minds.

Chapter Two contains a thorough review of relevant literature that will serve as a foundation for the current study. The first section will focus on the general historical and socio-cultural contexts for women in higher education. The second section will provide a detailed discussion and description of the profiles of women presidents and vice presidents, their career paths and advancement experiences, and the ingredients of leadership success for women in academia. The next two parts will cover personal barriers and coping strategies as well as professional barriers and coping strategies, respectively. A brief summation of the literature review on women leaders in higher education will then conclude this chapter.

Historical and Socio-Cultural Contexts for Women in Higher Education

According to some scholars (Altbach, 1999; Cohen, 1998; Geiger, 1999; Lucas, 1996; Rudolph, 1968), the system of American higher education was borrowed from the European university model, which was designed by and for men only. Religious men from different churches, for instance, established the first three colonial colleges for the purposes of training young men to be ministers, statesmen, and scholars. Although the first American higher education institution, Harvard College, was founded in 1636, women were excluded from state universities until 1855 (Chliwniak, 1997). Therefore, the system of higher learning, from the governing board to the student body, remained completely male for more than 200 years.

Late entry of women into American colleges and universities was caused by opposition to women's education as well as by widely held negative societal views about women's intellectual capacity. In the 17th century, women were perceived as intellectually inferior to men and as incapable of being educated (Chliwniak, 1997; Rudolph, 1968; Woody, 1966). Historian Frederick Rudolph (1968), for instance, noted that during colonial times, a common belief about a woman was that "Her faculties were not worth training. Her place was in the home, where man had assigned her a number of useful functions" (p. 308). Such statements reflected not only the American white male's negative beliefs about women's abilities and their absolute dominance over women, but also the patriarchal Western culture on which the nation was founded. Unlike their male counterparts, women were excluded from political, economic, and social activities and were limited to domestic responsibilities such as housekeeping, childrearing, sewing, and cooking (Chliwniak, 1997; Nidiffer, 2002, 2003; Rudolph, 1968; Solomon, 1985).

During the 18th century, more than 20 colleges were founded, but admissions to these colleges were restricted to men only (Lucas, 1996). Although a few women were inspired by the European Enlightenment and demanded higher education for women, their voices never received any attention. Consequently, some women reformers started a very small number of respectable schools and female academies similar to today's high school (Glazer-Raymo, 2002; Nidiffer, 2002; Rudolph, 1968). The resistance against women's higher education, once again, had to do with the widely held belief system about where women belong and about womanhood in the American society. The socio-cultural norms required women to be submissive daughters, wives, and mothers. Giving them more education than needed was viewed not only as wrong but also as possibly offensive to men who loved "a learned scholar, but not a learned wife" (Woody, 1966, p. 151). Since women could never become ministers, statesmen, physicians, or lawyers, college education for women in the colonial period was never considered (Nidiffer, 2001a, 2002, 2003; Rudolph, 1968; Thelin, 2004; Woody, 1966). Obviously, not only were women's identities, worth, and social functions defined by men, but their access to education was also still under men's control. Women's education did not receive much attention until the quality of men's lives was affected.

Early in the 19th century men recognized the need for more educated women who knew how to assist their fathers' or husbands' material advancement, handle the housework, and educate their children; at that point, women's illiteracy became a problem (Rudolph, 1968; Woody, 1966). As a result, common schools were opened to women in the 1820s so that the illiteracy gap between men and women could be reduced and so that women could become better wives, homemakers, and mothers (Chliwniak, 1997; Rudolph, 1968; Solomon, 1985). The beginning stage of women's education, unsurprisingly, was restricted to basic

literacy training and domestic studies that prepared women for marriage and motherhood. The American female at that time "was recognized as capable of being educated—up to a point" (Rudolph, 1968, p. 310). College education was the point where women were still resisted because "there did not seem to be any compelling reasons why young women needed any more Greek, Latin, and mathematics than they learned in the academy" (Rudolph, 1968, p. 310).

A decade later, the idea of women's higher education was finally, but grudgingly, accepted by male educators because of the great need for more educated women to teach at common schools and to serve as missionaries while men were pursuing increased business opportunities (Chliwniak, 1997; Nidiffer, 2001a; Rudolph, 1968). Through a small number of all-female academies, seminaries, and colleges, more women were able to engage in higher education (Chliwniak, 1997; Nidiffer, 2001a; Rudolph, 1968; Thelin, 2004). For the first time, American women had the opportunity to expand slightly their cultural boundaries as well as their social contracts although marriage was still considered as women's "real profession" (Solomon, 1985). Attitudes toward women in the academy, likewise, remained relatively unchanged. The general public, including male college professors, still believed that women were not only physically but also intellectually inferior to men and that they did not have the mental capacity to do college work (Nidiffer, 2001a; Woody, 1966). Historian Woody (1966) recorded that "These sex differences in mind were said to be an insuperable barrier, against which no propaganda for the equality of women could be effective" (p. 154).

In 1837, Oberlin College in Ohio first tested coeducation by enrolling four female freshmen (Nidiffer, 2002; Rudloph, 1968; Solomon, 1985; Thelin, 2004; Woody, 1966); but women did not gain access to public universities and private universities until 1855 and

1872, respectively (Chliwniak, 1997). Arlton, Lewellen, and Grissett (1999) commented that even after women entered college campuses, their roles and participation were sanctioned by socio-cultural norms that limited them to acceptable roles and chores. According to Glazer-Raymo (2002), "Sex roles were maintained at Oberlin, and as young men earned their education by doing unpaid farm labor . . . their female classmates provided them with unpaid housekeeping" (p. 699).

By the 1860s, more than 40 institutions provided college education to women (Thelin, 2004). The Morrill Act of 1862 boosted the founding of land-grant state colleges and universities and, consequently, expanded women's access to coeducational institutions (Chamberlain, 2001). The "Seven Sisters" colleges that offered rigorous college training were established during the 1870s (Nidiffer, 2002) as well. Johns Hopkins, the first American research university with a graduate school, was founded in 1876 but was designated for men only (Glazer-Raymo, 2002). By the 1880s, more than 30% of American colleges had opened their doors to women (Rudolph, 1968), and female normal schools were created because some institutions continued to deny admission to women (Solomon, 1985).

With the increase of women in the academy within both the public and private sectors, women's higher learning suffered from unprecedented religious, intellectual, and social attacks. Male scholars from different disciplines argued against the idea of higher education for women based on various negative theories and views such as women's biological differences, their physical and intellectual limitations, their less developed brains, and their gender-prescribed social functions (Chliwniak, 1997; Nidiffer, 2001a, 2002; Rudolph, 1968; Solomon, 1985; Woody, 1966). Opponents of women's education implied that rigorous intellectual training would make women unsuitable for marriage, trigger

women's infertility, unfeminize women, distract men in the academy, and produce domestic problems such as the threat of having a strong minded or an intelligent wife (Chliwniak, 1997; Nidiffer, 2002, 2003; Rudolph, 1968; Solomon, 1985; Thelin, 2004; Woody, 1966).

Between the 1890s and World War I, women made gains in admission to undergraduate programs, and they reduced men's resistance to women's involvement in graduate studies. After 1890, the doors to doctoral programs were reluctantly opened to women (Glazer-Raymo, 2002). Pioneer women faculty members, unfortunately, were not taken seriously, and they found it hard to gain social as well as intellectual acceptance, not to mention the opportunity to teach in coeducational universities (Chamberlain, 1988; Glazer-Raymo, 2002). Hence, women faculty were found either in women's colleges or normal schools.

By 1900, 60% of colleges had women as undergraduate students on their campuses. Ten years later, women represented 47% of the student body and 26% of the faculty of American colleges and universities (Glazer-Raymo, 2002). With the increase of women in both single-sex and coeducational institutions, women administrators became more widely accepted. Although most of the first women presidents and academic deans were hired in women's colleges, the position of dean of women was created in coeducational universities to meet women students' needs (Glazer-Raymo, 2002; Nidiffer, 2001c).

A big gap continued to exist between men's and women's educational experiences in the early 20th century as well. Very few women had the option of attending coeducational universities, which were considered superior to women's colleges (Geiger, 1999). Besides, while male students could choose to major in a variety of fields ranging from political science to economics, law, divinity, and medicine, most female students were funneled into

"women's" fields such as teacher education, home economics, and social work (Nidiffer, 2001a, 2003; Rudolph, 1968; Solomon, 1985).

One newly developed stereotype during the early 20th century was that "women were incapable of learning science and were skilled only in the humanities, languages, and possibly applied social sciences" (Nidiffer, 2003, p. 17). In addition, whenever an area of study was "feminized," its value dropped. Meanwhile, although women seemed to be capable of handling the strain of serious study, opponents of women's higher education did not stop searching for reasons to limit women's access to higher education. Now they claimed that a college education for women was causing great harm to American society and to college men because fewer college women were married. Even if they did marry, many had fewer children, and their divorce rate was higher. Opponents proclaimed that to allow women not to reproduce offspring was simply "race suicide" (Nidiffer, 2002, 2003; Solomon, 1985; Thelin, 2004). Moreover, they also accused coeducation of "feminizing both male students and the institutions themselves" (Nidiffer, 2002, p. 9).

The disparity between women and men's experiences in the academy was not abridged until the 1930s and 1940s when women filled the space left by white men who were drawn to the battlefields during World Wars I and II (Geiger, 1999; Glazer-Raymo, 2002). In fact, women's higher education reached its first golden age during this period, with women representing more than 40% of the undergraduate study body (Nidiffer, 2001a). However, women experienced setbacks by the 1950s because returning veterans were given priority for higher education (Chliwniak, 1997; Glazer-Raymo, 2002), demonstrating again that American society still valued men's education more than women's. The position of dean of women also started to fade out during the 1950s and 1960s as the dean of men's and dean of

women's positions were combined. Unsurprisingly, while women deans were fired or relocated, their male counterparts were promoted to the newly created position of chief student affairs officer (Glazer-Raymo, 2002; Schwartz, 1997; Tuttle, 2004).

Although anti-discrimination laws and regulations safeguarded women's access to higher education, these laws were neither enforced nor expanded to fight against employment discrimination in academe until 1970 "when Bernice R. Sandler of the Women's Equity Action League (WEAL) filed the first charges of sex discrimination in academe, initiating WEAL's campaign to spur the federal government to enforce the Executive Order against colleges and universities" (Chamberlain, 1988, p. 15). Women did not regain their stride until the 1970s and 1980s when they gradually began to outnumber men as undergraduate and graduate students (Chliwniak, 1997; Nidiffer, 2001a; U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Women also made significant gains as faculty, staff, and administrators during this period (Glazer-Raymo, 2002).

As the major clientele of American higher education, women today can be found in every aspect and discipline of higher education as students, staff, faculty, and administrators. Since the 1980s, women have become the majority recipients of bachelor's and master's degrees. In 2001-02, 46% of all doctorates were received by women (U. S. Department of Education, 2004); and the National Organization for Research at the University of Chicago (2001) predicted that it will not take long for women to become the majority of doctoral recipients as well. While little doubt exists that academic women's status at the dawn of the 21st century is much better than 200 years ago, women have not reached parity in higher education yet (Nidiffer, 2002).

In the same way, women faculty, staff, and administrators continue to have different experiences at work and lag behind their male counterparts in terms of status, positions, salaries, and recognition. Statistics show that women are still segregated at the lower levels of the occupational hierarchy. The U.S. Department of Education (2002), for instance, reported that as of the fall of 1999, women occupied 54% of the lecturer positions but represented only 21% of the full professors. The percentage of female tenured full-time professors increased slightly to 22% in the fall of 2001 (U.S. Department of Education, 2003b). In addition, "In general, men earned higher average salaries than women regardless of contract length or rank" (p. 3).

Table 1

*Comparison of Male and Female Staff and Administrators, Fall 2001*

| Category | Total | Men Number (%) | Women Number (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| All employees | 3,134,008 | 1,472,832 (47%) | 1,661,176 (53%) |
| Executive/administrative/managerial staff | 156,088 | 81,134 (52%) | 74,954 (48%) |
| Other administrative[a] staff | 57,063 | 23,059 (40%) | 34,004 (60%) |
| Other professional (support/service) staff | 557,091 | 218,361 (39%) | 338,730 (61%) |
| Nonprofessional staff | 963,771 | 350,886 (36%) | 612,885 (64%) |

*Note.* Source: U.S. Department of Education, 2003b, Table 1.

[a]Defined as follows: "Persons whose assignments include work directly related to management policies or general business operations of the institution, but who are subordinate to employees classified as executive and managerial" (U.S. Department of Education, 2003b, p. 74).

As for women in administrative positions, statistics illustrate how fewer women occupants are found as the level of the position increases. As shown in Table 1, in spite of the fact that men represented only 47% of all employees and 36% to 40% of other administrative or staff positions, they held 52% of the executive/administrative/managerial positions. Data from the American Council on Education (ACE, 2002) documented that in 2001, the percentage of women chief executive officers (CEOs) increased to 21% of the total presidencies. However, most gains were in the public and private two-year college sector. Without counting two-year institutions, women occupied only 18% of the college presidencies. Given the slow increase in women CEOs in higher education, Gatteau (2000) predicted that more than 30 years will elapse before women can reach parity with men in terms of college presidencies.

As long as the traditional values and belief systems about men's and women's places as well as roles in the society remain unchanged, men and women will continue to have gendered experiences in higher education and in the workplace. Since work has traditionally been the center of men's lives (Buzzanell, 1995; Kimmel, 2004; Mark, 1981), women who are trying to expand their boundaries by working in historically "men's fields" will be perceived as a threat to men and, thus, will face more scrutiny and resistance.

To sum up, as stated by Geiger (1999), "Two powerful reasons exist for the serious study of the history of higher education: because things change and because some things do not change" (p. 38). A brief review of the historical and socio-cultural contexts for women in higher education documents that although the system of American higher education has enormously expanded over the centuries, many of its male-oriented norms, values, standards, and expectations remain unchallenged at the highest levels. Unless leaders of higher

education institutions purposefully aim at reexamining the academy's conventional male practices and standards together with society's gendered views about women and men, women in the profession will continue to be haunted by numerous societal, institutional, interpersonal, and personal barriers to success.

Women as College or University Presidents and Vice Presidents

O'Neill (1994) pointed out that power in American society is "still conceived in mostly masculine terms and surrounded by male images" (p. 11). Scholars in leadership have also underscored that the image of a good leader or a promotable manager has been associated with masculine characteristics (Appelbaum & Shapiro, 1993; Bass, 1981, 1990; Burns, 1978). In his book on leadership, Burns (1978) briefly commented on women in leadership and suggested that:

> Over the centuries, femininity has been stereotyped as dependent, submissive, and conforming, and hence women have been seen as lacking in leadership qualities. In some cultures, in consequence, women are cut off from power positions as well as from the stepping stones and access routes that reach toward leadership…The male bias is reflected in the false conception of leadership as mere command or control. (p. 50)

Bennis (1999) also warned about the traditional "command and control" leadership style and claimed that exemplary leadership cannot happen without the full inclusion and cooperation of followers.

Despite the fact that the concepts of power and leadership are gendered, some talented women have managed to carve out their own niche to be accepted as legitimate leaders. The review that follows will focus on the demographic profiles as well as advancement and leadership experiences of women presidents and vice presidents in American higher education.

*Profiles of Women Presidents*

Women at the helm of higher education institutions have usually maintained an exceptional record of success as outstanding teachers, researchers, scholars, and administrators. Murrell and Donohue (1982), for instance, interviewed 44 women presidents, provosts, vice presidents, chancellors, vice provosts, or vice chancellors at four-year state colleges in 1979 and found that most senior women leaders had prior experience in mid-level administration. Women presidents and provosts in their study all had doctorates, and more than a third of them reported that they worked for 50 to 85 hours a week. About 43% of them were currently married, but 27% of them had never married.

Fisher, Tack, and Wheeler's (1988) national study on college presidents showed that more than half of the college presidents began their careers in academia as faculty members and that the most common position held before the presidency was vice president for academic affairs or provost. In Wheeler's (1988) study of female presidents, she found that women were more likely than men to enter the profession as faculty (72% versus 69%). The most common prior position for men was provost (40%) but for women the position was dean (32%). Data from both studies showed that the majority of men and women presidents were from academic affairs.

Another demographic study conducted in 1985 by Touchton, Shavlik, and Davis (1991) focused on 32 women CEOs in public four-year institutions. They reported that the median age of this group was 52 and that 45% of them were married while the rest of them were either separated, divorced, widowed, or single. Fifty-nine percent of them had children although only 7% had more than one, and 44% of them were themselves a first or only child. An interesting finding about these women's parental background was that, although most of

their parents did not have college degrees, their mothers were better educated than their fathers. As to their education, all of them had doctorates, and most of their doctoral degree majors were social science or education. Before assuming the presidency, the most commonly held position was vice president for academic affairs, and all of them had previous academic experiences or careers.

A recent study verified the existence of the traditional path to the presidency as well. Birnbaum and Umbach (2001) used the American Council on Education's (ACE) 1995 data on college and university presidents to conduct an empirical study on college presidents' career trajectories. They defined "traditional" presidents as "presidents whose professional trajectories suggest a continuing career commitment to higher education" (p. 205) and nontraditional presidents as "presidents whose careers have alternated between higher education and institutional positions and those who have had no previous higher education experience" (p. 206). Under the traditional president category were scholar presidents and steward presidents. Scholar-presidents had served as full-time faculty, and their two prior positions were in higher education. Steward-presidents did not have teaching experiences, but their previous two positions were in higher education. Under the nontraditional president category, spanner-presidents had spanned their boundaries between higher education and other fields, and stranger-presidents had neither teaching nor administrative experiences in higher education.

Birnbaum and Umbach (2001) found that, in 1995, about 89% of all presidents moved up through traditional paths while 11.3% of them were spanners and strangers. When compared to their male counterparts, women presidents were much more likely to have followed the traditional path. Another fact was that the most diverse group was the scholar

presidents while the least diverse group was the stranger presidents. Thus, they concluded

that "the royal road to the college or university presidency remains the traditional path of the

Scholar" (p. 210) and that women had fewer alternatives than their male counterparts.

The most recent ACE report (2002) on American college and university presidents

documented that women occupied 21% of the total presidencies in 2001. As illustrated in

Table 2, female presidents were more likely than their male counterparts to hold a doctorate

but were much less likely to be currently married. Only 10% of men presidents were not

married, compared with 41% of women presidents. Even if the females were married, they

were more likely than their male counterparts to have spouses with paid employment,

meaning they received less social support from their partners. Another major difference

between male and female presidents was that more female presidents had either left their job

or worked part-time to rear their children. As shown in Table 2, while about a fourth (26%)

of the female presidents put their childrearing responsibility before their careers, only 2% of

the males had changed job circumstances for child-rearing.

Table 2

*Comparison of Characteristics of Male and Female Presidents, 2001*

| Category | Men | Women |
|---|---|---|
| Had doctoral degree | 75.4% | 79.5% |
| Were currently married | 89.6% | 58.9% |
| Had employed spouses[a] | 50.0% | 74.0% |
| Had changed job circumstances for child-rearing | 1.9% | 25.8% |

*Note.* Source: ACE, Center for Policy Analysis, 2002, Table 3.3.

[a]Elicited from narrative (p. 17).

Other findings from the same ACE report were that female presidents were less likely to have earned tenure as a faculty member in both current and prior positions and that they spent an average of 1.4 fewer years in both their prior and present positions than their male counterparts. The top three areas of doctoral study for women presidents were education (55%), humanities (17%), and social sciences (15%) as compared to education (41%), social sciences (14%), and humanities (13%) for men. The similar educational backgrounds may potentially influence the career path to the college and university presidency. While only about 13% of women presidents' majors did not fall into these three categories, 32% of men presidents chose majors in fields other than the ones identified. No significant difference existed between men and women presidents' ages and years of experience as full-time faculty members.

As to women presidents' career paths, the 2002 ACE report documented that when compared with men presidents, women presidents were more likely to move to the presidency from the positions of provost or other senior campus executive but were less likely to have served as a president. The percentage of male and female presidents who moved up through nontraditional paths had increased as well. In 1986, only 10% of presidents came from outside the field of higher education. This number increased to 15% in 2001, with more male than female presidents from outside academia.

*Profiles of Women Vice Presidents*

Due to the late entry and the relatively small number of women in higher education administration, less research has been conducted on female leaders than on their male counterparts. Given the dearth of information available about women administrators, when compared with women college or university presidents, even less documentation exists on

women vice presidents (Etaugh, 1986). While ACE provides regular national data on male and female college presidents, Walton and McDade (2001) found that the only large-scale national study that produced demographic data on women chief academic officers (CAOs) was conducted by Kathryn Moore in 1983.

According to Moore (1984), only 13.6% of the provosts in her study were female. About 90% of the women presidents and provosts had doctorates, and more than 80% of the women provosts held academic positions. While she found no fixed route to the presidency, holding a faculty position was identified as the most common entry-point for access to top-level administrative positions. A few years later, when Allen (1986) was trying to describe a typical CAO in American colleges, she had to use a white male model because only 5% of the CAOs at that time were women. These 5% of female CAOs served either at women's colleges or were members of Catholic groups with similar professional backgrounds and career paths as their male counterparts. Moreover, very few of them were married or had children.

Other research efforts with women vice presidents as subjects included Murrell and Donohue's (1982) study on women presidents and vice presidents at four-year state colleges in 1979 and McKenny's (2000) doctoral dissertation. All of the vice presidents for academic affairs in Murrell and Donohue's study had obtained the doctorate. In her doctoral dissertation, McKenny (2000) compared women and men CAOs' career paths and mobility factors to determine if gender affected men and women's careers in public community colleges. She concluded that no significant differences existed between the sexes except that women CAOs were younger and moving faster but serving shorter terms than the men CAOs.

Since little was known about women CAOs, Walton and McDade (2001) conducted a large-scale research study in 1991 to collect baseline data about this administrative group. They reported that about half of the women CAOs were at Baccalaureate I and II liberal arts colleges and that only 12.8% of them were able to break into large doctoral institutions. Regarding educational and professional background, most women CAOs had doctoral degree majors in humanities/fine arts, social sciences, or education. Half of them held tenured faculty positions, had previous administrative experience, and had spent an average of 21.7 years in academe. Approximately 80% of the women were in their first term as CAO; and 64% of them had held the position for fewer than 5 years. The median age of the women CAOs was 52.7 years; and more than half of them (55.9%) were first-born children. Fewer than half of them (45.8%) were married, and 30% of them had never married. Of those married women, only half had children. One interesting finding was that when these women CAOs were studying in high schools, more than half of their mothers were working outside the home, thus serving as role models for them.

What can be learned from these women presidents' and vice presidents' background and career patterns? The first commonality among them was that most had earned the doctorate. Second, they were more likely to serve in small institutions than large research universities. Third, women CEOs were more likely to have followed the traditional career path. Fourth, many of the women CAOs were first-born children, and many of their mothers had equivalent or even better educational backgrounds than their fathers. Fifth, women presidents and vice presidents were much less likely to have a career, marriage, and children. Sixth, for women to move into CEO or CAO positions, previous experiences in teaching and

administration were essential. Finally, both women presidents and vice presidents completed shorter terms in office than men holding similar positions.

<p align="center">*How Did They Get There?*</p>

To answer the question of how some senior women leaders have achieved their positions in higher education, Murrell and Donohue (1982) studied the career paths of 44 four-year public university senior leaders and found that women's chances for becoming senior-level administrators were enhanced by doctoral degrees, mid-level administrative experience, and visibility among presidents. More than half of the women vice presidents in their study were invited to occupy the position by their presidents. This last strategy of becoming highly visible was also emphasized as the most important and effective strategy by half of the women CAOs studied by Walton and McDade (2001) as well as by the 32 women presidents involved in Touchton, Shavlik, and Davis' (1991) research. These researchers found that after some of the women leaders became interested in seeking a presidency, they started to position themselves by increasing their professional visibility, enhancing their strengths, and working on their deficiencies.

In fact, successful women leaders quickly recognize the importance of increasing their professional visibility both within and outside their institutions. One common strategy used by the 20 women presidents and vice presidents in public four-year institutions in Elder's (1986) study, for instance, was participation in professional associations for senior women leaders. Half of these women leaders belonged to four or more professional associations while 30% of them belonged to two or three professional organizations. More than half of them recognized such activities as essential to their administrative effectiveness.

The 32 women CEOs in Touchton, Shavlik, and Davis' (1991) study also believed that experience as board members for educational, governmental, corporate, or non-profit organizations was the most helpful professional activity that led to their advancement to the presidency. More than half of the 32 women presidents served on four to six or more institutional boards before assuming their present position as CEO.

Active involvement in professional development programs was another common strategy used by women leaders. The 14 women presidents and vice presidents in Anglis' (1990) study, for instance, believed that involvement in leadership development programs sponsored by well-known professional associations enhanced their career mobility. The two most helpful professional organizations identified by women presidents in Thouchton, Shavlik, and Davis' (1991) study were ACE and Harvard's Institute for Educational Management.

The same research finding was echoed by Walton and McDade (2001), Brown (2000), and Rosynsky (2002). More than half of the women provosts in Walton and McDade's (2001) study had participated in professional development programs sponsored by these two prestigious organizations, and these women CAOs believed that such experiences led to their advancement to their current positions. Women presidents in Brown's (2000) and Rosynsky's (2002) dissertation studies also benefited from national education programs sponsored by well-known professional organizations such as ACE. As scholars (Chamberlain, 2001; Laden, 1996; Weisman, 2002) reflected on the progression of academic and administrative leaders in higher education, they recognized the important contributions made by professional associations and women's organizations as well.

Networking has proved to be another popular strategy used by women leaders to connect to those in power. Specifically, women leaders in Anglis' (1990) dissertation study identified networking with men and women as a critical element in their career advancement. Women presidents in Touchton, Shavlik, and Davis' (1991) research reported using more male than female contacts. Before accepting their current presidencies, many had been in two to five or more presidential search processes. Of the 32 women presidents, 74% were "inside" institutional candidates, and the most typical way for them to become candidates was through nomination. Johnsrud's (1991) study of advancement to 454 position vacancies in a large research university, Wagner's (1991) personal story, and Rosynsky's (2002) dissertation study of four women college presidents all documented the importance of using sponsorship, nomination, and networking as effective strategies for advancement in academe.

As to mentoring, all of the six women vice presidents in Cline's (1996) dissertation research reported that having one or more mentors was an important factor in their advancement and their overall success. Mentors can be men, women, colleagues, partners, parents, or supervisors. In Warner and DeFleur's (1993) essay, working with male mentors or sponsors was suggested as one way for women to make themselves known in the "old boy network" so they can advance. Clearly, mentors provide priceless advice on how to fit in the system, how to develop linkages with others, and how to acquire needed resources (Anglis, 1990; Johnsrud, 1991; Rosynsky, 2002; Sandler, Silverberg, & Hall, 1996).

When the six women presidents included in Gatteau's (2000) dissertation study reflected on their road to success in their careers, they all talked about how the many male and female heroes, mentors, and role models in their lives had inspired them. Bower (1993) went on and described mentoring as "a common aspect of every successful administrator's

career" (p. 91). Interestingly, some scholars (Anderson & Ramey, 1990; Braun, 1990; Scanlon, 1997) have warned about the negative impact of poor mentoring relationships and recommended careful selection of mentors as well as the cultivation of positive and empowering relationships.

When asked how she obtained the position as Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Madison in an interview with Shinn (2002), Dr. Donna Shalala, who was named by *Business Week* as one of the top five managers in higher education, replied: "Right through my career, I overreached…I've never been in an administrative position in which the consensus was that I actually had the qualifications" (p. 21). In other words, her high aims, strong confidence, courage, and risk-taking behaviors paved her way to success. After examining 10 senior women administrators' advancement experience in public universities in one southern state, Dietz (1997) obtained similar results and concluded that these women advanced because of their own competence, independence, and risk-taking behaviors.

While Brown, Van Ummersen, and Sturnick (2001) warned aspiring women not to accept the presidency at troubled institutions, President Marlene Springer (Springer, 2003) at the College of Staten Island in New York City reflected on her journey to the presidency and stressed the importance of being willing to take risks. She believed that avoiding the troubled institutions and waiting for the "good fits" was impractical. She pointed out the fact that most troubled institutions were still led by women and that often boards at these institutions were willing to risk appointing women presidents because men had failed. Therefore, she encouraged aspiring women to take calculated risks and leaps of faith.

Besides risk-taking, the women CAOs in Walton and McDade's (2001) study used other strategies such as making their career interests known to well-established male and

female colleagues, developing new contacts and getting to know current CAOs, asking for sponsorships or nominations, and seeking public-speaking opportunities. Slightly more than half of them indicated that they were attracted to the positions and strategically planned their administrative paths.

Although some women presidents and vice presidents reported getting their positions because they happened to be ready when a vacancy occurred (Anglis, 1990; Murphy, 1991; Rosynsky, 2002; Walton & McDade, 2001), simply doing a great job and waiting for others' recognition did not help women much in terms of advancement. Harrow (1993) and Tinsley (1984) warned that hard work, exceptional academic and administrative achievements, and dedication were not enough for women in academe to obtain promotions or to secure their jobs. As a result, they stressed the importance of career mapping. To help women develop their career plans strategically, Harrow (1993) proposed a three-phased strategic career plan that included most of the previously identified strategies.

Phase 1 of Harrow's (1993) plan involved building skills, abilities, credibility, and a relationship with one's boss and colleagues while gaining access to essential information, analyzing the political climate, identifying sources as well as uses of power, and being aware of office politics. Phase 2 emphasized identifying individual and institutional support systems, building coalitions as well as alliances, and seeking powerful mentors to build a strong web of support. Phase 3, the final stage, entailed marketing activities such as increasing visibility; building a positive public persona; acting like a winner; continued practice and reflection on a wide range of leadership skills; and remaining competent as well as current in one's professional field, human relations, and important issues on campus.

In conclusion, except for the fact that women leaders need doctoral degrees, faculty and administrative experiences, involvement in professional organizations and professional development programs, sponsorships, networks, and mentors, not much is known about the process of women's advancement into senior positions in higher education. This researcher found that most available research studies on women leaders' journeys to top-level positions were completed by individual scholars or doctoral students using relatively small sample sizes. Even with the assistance of relevant informational essays or personal accounts, still too much information is missing. Therefore, a clear picture of what it takes for women to advance to executive positions in higher education institutions still needs to be generated.

*Ingredients of Leadership Success*

While Anglis (1990) focused on the upward mobility of women in higher education and emphasized that "few (studies) have investigated the strategies that lead to career success," (p. ii) Flanagan (2002) called for more studies on strategies that senior women leaders use for leadership success. Given the small number of empirical studies on women leaders in higher education, all relevant sources with merit, such as demographic studies on women leaders, interviews with senior women leaders, and women leaders' personal essays or accounts included in books or journal articles will be accessed to construct a more holistic picture of the ingredients needed to ensure women leaders' effectiveness and success.

What does it take for women to remain successful in senior leadership positions within higher education? What is essential for women's leadership success? The 30 senior women leaders in public and private two- and four-year institutions studied by Clemons (1998), Cline (1996), Dietz' (1997), and Gatteau (2000) unanimously emphasized how they attained their success in their institutions by overachieving and outperforming. These women

proved that they were competent in their discipline, confident, creative, savvy, and committed to their institutions. Being able to evaluate and see the "big picture" was important, too. Nidiffer (2001b), likewise, believed that women had a comparative advantage because of their ability to broaden their array of skills and traits to cope with the dominant culture of leadership.

To learn more about women's perspectives on the presidency, the Office of Women in Higher Education of ACE (Brown, Van Ummersen, & Sturnick, 2001) facilitated a series of 13 round-table discussion sessions and identified 11 keys to presidential success. These ingredients for success were taking risks, mapping professional and career goals, working with institutional change agents, learning and developing professional skills as well as competencies for changing the organizational climate, cultivating board members, creating a positive environment, being politically and culturally savvy, focusing on priorities, mentoring and being mentored, building a supportive and proactive network, and renewing oneself spiritually.

What does Dr. Donna Shalala, President of the University of Miami and former Secretary of Health and Human Services, think it takes to be a successful leader in higher education? When interviewed by Shinn (2002), Shalala emphasized consensus-building skills, interpersonal skills, communication skills, attention to process, and nudging instead of controlling. Other important skills included establishing and making participatory decision-making systems work, delegating, and, most importantly, learning how to work with the faculty and understanding the culture of shared governance. According to Eisinger (2002), Shalala was able to assume multiple roles and remain effective because she set priorities, knew her role, and was committed to service.

Dr. Carol Harter, the first woman President of the State University of New York at Geneseo, shared some generalizations about outstanding leaders based on her experiences and observations. According to Harter (1993), effective leaders had these characteristics: strong and clear visions and commitments, holistic thinking processes, ability to work with teams, outstanding management skills, knowledge of when and how to delegate, highly sophisticated communication and public relations skills, political competence, energy, sense of humor, and charisma. Consequently, to be successful, women must develop and demonstrate both feminine and masculine competencies, learn to be political without losing their integrity, break through the good old boys' network by establishing their own networking arenas, be healthy enough to handle a great amount of stress, and learn to relax and be themselves.

Dr. E. K. Fretwell Jr. (1991), Chancellor Emeritus of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, stated that one presidential effectiveness secret is focusing on "Improving the academic enterprise, identifying and working with the faculty, staff, and others to achieve the major educational objectives, and finding the resources to make it all possible" (p. xi). In fact, the issue of effective fundraising has become more important than ever before (Cook, 1997). Recognizing the importance of fundraising, Milley (1991) surveyed 18 women state college and university presidents to identify their approaches to raising money. She concluded that women presidents may have a fundraising advantage because they often ask for others' help. These women presidents reported that small dinner parties, face-to-face receptions or meetings with business and civic leaders, alumni parties, personal visits, concerts for donors, and athletic events can all be great fundraising activities. To be

successful, women leaders used their verbal, interpersonal, and selling skills to encourage donors to contribute money.

According to Allen (1986) and Walton and McDade (2001), the position of vice president for academic affairs is also a very tough, complex, and demanding job. For women CAOs to be successful, they must be good listeners and observers, be fair and consistent, and do the job well in their own way. For future provosts, Allen (1986) and Walton and McDade (2001) suggested that women gain budgeting and personnel management experience, find ways to deal with the paperwork, learn to dictate well, seek help from a trusted mentor, know what they believe in and stand for it, develop professional networks, know how to handle campus politics and conflicts, recognize their limitations and delegate, learn how to run good meetings and follow-up, be as visible as they can without getting over-scheduled, develop a sense of humor, and find ways to manage stress without sacrificing their physical and mental well-being.

In summary, to be successful, women leaders need a wide range of personal, professional, organizational, and community experiences as well as skills, such as communication, consensus-building, collaboration, fundraising, budgeting, personnel management, public relations, and networking skills. Common personal characteristics shared by successful women in the profession range from confidence, high aspirations, risk-taking, strong vision and commitment, to humor, enthusiasm, positive attitudes, and integrity. Finally, given the demanding nature of executive positions in higher education, success will be impossible without delegation, personal and professional support networks, attending to the big picture, and strategic moves.

Personal Barriers and Coping Strategies

Generally speaking, scholars and practitioners attributed many of the problems

reported by women leaders to the "gendered" American society (Acker, 1992, 2004;

Alvesson & Billing, 1997; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Buzzanell, 1995; Gilligan, 1982;

Golombok & Fivush, 1994; Kanter, 1993; Kimmel, 2004; Witmer, 1995). Within a gendered

society, gender stereotypes as well as gender socialization consciously and unconsciously

have an impact on every component of the social system, including individuals, families,

education (e.g., higher education), and the workplace (Curry, 2000; Hearn, 2001; Johnsrud &

Heck, 1994; Johnsrud, 1991; Jones, 1993; Mark, 1981; Ropers-Huilman, 2003; Sandler,

1986; Valian, 1998). For women to survive and thrive in the traditional male field of higher

education administration, they must first prepare themselves at the personal level.

*Personal Barriers to Success*

For the purpose of this study, individual barriers will be defined as obstacles or

conflicts that women leaders experience at the personal level. As shown in Figure 1 below,

personal barriers reported by women leaders can be grouped into these two categories:

psychological and family-related barriers. Almost all of these personal barriers are directly or

indirectly related to the polarized value systems and gender roles of men and women in

American society. Traditionally, "being a man" requires assertion, separation, control of the

environment, competition, and rationality, while "being a woman" demands meekness,

connection, cooperation, compassion, and sensitivity (Gilligan, 1982; Golombok & Fivush,

1994; Kimmel, 2004; Marshall, 1984). While being able to compete and control are not only

common but also important for men, women usually feel less comfortable with competition

and separation. Harter (1993), for instance, contended that women have more difficulty

developing self-confidence and leadership tone, focusing on the big picture instead of the details, and getting ready for ongoing planning and negotiation.

Figure 1

*Personal Barriers to Success*
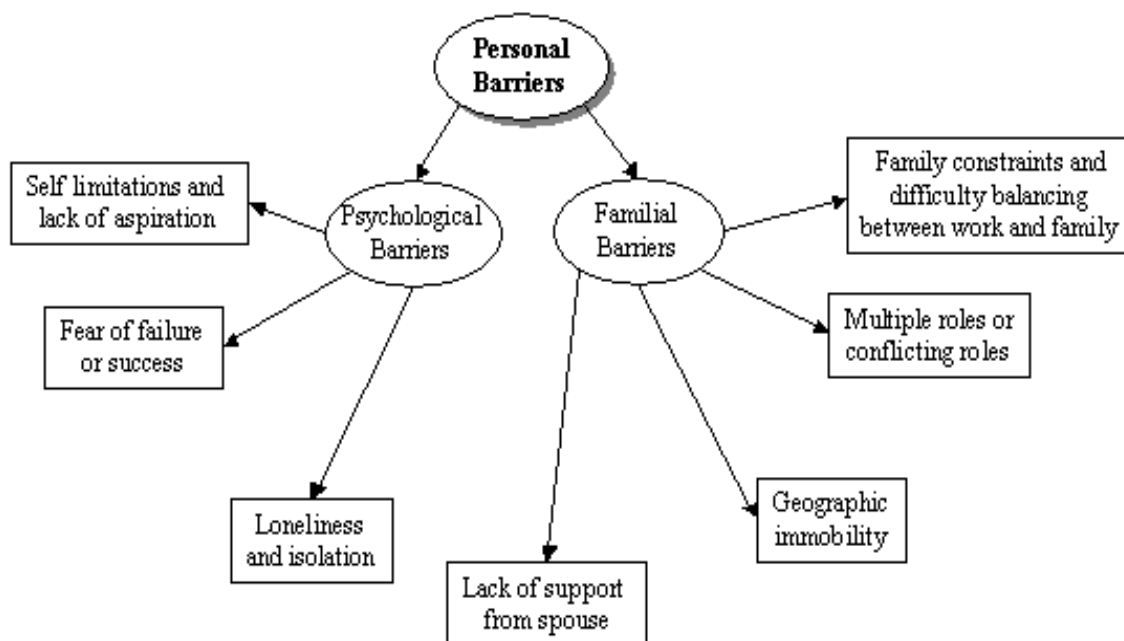


*Note.* For sources of different personal barriers, please refer to Appendix VII, p. 242.

Similarly, Witmer (1995) described fear of success and fear of failure as "two sides of the same coin" (p. 168). She believed that since women are not socialized to compete and stand out (positively or negatively), they have more to deal with, win or lose. Since women usually take their jobs more seriously than men, they frequently have difficulty separating failure of a task from failure as a person (Witmer, 1995). As the eight women leaders Flanagan (2002) interviewed challenged the status quo by leading differently, they admitted experiencing fear when strongly resisted. Senior women leaders interviewed by Dietz (1997) reported the issue of isolation for women occupying top leadership positions as well.

In fact, gender stereotypes can negatively affect both men and women. For instance, while women are expected to be the source of strength for successful men, acting as catalysts for successful women is not so easy for men. In fact, intelligent and successful wives today are often perceived more as a threat than a blessing. Moreover, as part of the socialization process, women generally feel obligated to assume more family responsibilities than men. Although women today can pursue their own careers, they are still expected to put their families first because no matter how good they are in the workplace, home is still "their" primary job (Jones, 1993; Kimmel, 2004; Mark, 1981; Witmer, 1995). For women who want both a career and a family, balancing these two priorities becomes their biggest personal challenge (Bruckner, 1998; Clark & Caffarella, 1999; Hensel, 1991; Jones, 1993; LeBlanc, 1993; Harris, Lowery, & Arnold, 2002; Mark, 1981; O'Laughlin & Bischoff, 2001; Rosynsky, 2002; Thompson & Beauvais, 2000; Villadsen & Tack, 1986; Wilking, 2001; Zakery, 1991).

Consequently, conventional wisdom emphasizes how women are overburdened and often prefer not to move up the career ladder. Scholars (Moore & Sagaria, 1986; Sagaria, 1988), however, did not buy into this notion. Based on two large-scale survey studies on women administrators, they found that many women administrators were not only willing to move geographically but also anticipated such a move for career advancement. Despite possible negative consequences of advancement, the 84 senior women administrators and faculty surveyed by Zakery (1991) still aspired to higher positions. Many of the women CAOs in Walton and McDade's (2001) study also said they were interested in assuming a college or university presidency.

Watkins, Herrin, and McDonald (1998) and Patton (1990), however, suggested that not all women have the luxury of relocation for career advancement. Such geographic immobility can lead to limited bargaining power, limited job market and career choices, lower salaries, and infrequent promotions. Moving the whole family only for the sake of the wife's advancement is still less acceptable in society and, thus, becomes a potential obstacle for women's career advancement (Touchton, Shavlik, & Davis, 1991).

In any case, "Women who hold policy-making positions in an institution of higher education generally are required by society to be model mothers and spouses, concerned citizens involved in civic activities, good teachers, authors of renown, and exceptional managers" (Villadsen & Tack, 1986, p. 172). Studies have showed that, given the demands placed upon women leaders, they were more likely to suffer from "mommy guilt," marital instability, role conflicts, health problems, and stress unless they have reliable and quality support systems (Dietz, 1997; Gatteau, 2000; Gerdes, 2003; Harter, 1993; Nelson & Burke, 2000; Rosnsky, 2002; Villadsen & Tack, 1986).

*Strategies for Overcoming Personal Barriers*

While the process of women's advancement into top-level leadership positions remains unclear, one of the prices that women pay for success in the profession is already apparent. More than a decade ago, Hensel (1991) lamented that "nearly one half of the women who stay in academe remain either single or childless" (p. iv). Has this changed over time? The answer is, unfortunately, no. Given the fact that women today are still the major caregivers for children and the elderly in their families, they continue to struggle between work and family; and their careers are more likely to be interrupted when conflicts occur.

Data on women presidents and vice presidents presented previously serve as the best support

for this assertion.

As Ausejo (1993) reflected on what it takes for women to succeed as leaders, she

stated that:

> From early childhood women are not raised to be leaders, nor are they conditioned to
> develop the skills and attitudes that are needed to become effective administrators….
> Social programming and the effects of sexism will not disappear overnight, but
> women who choose to succeed will see it as a challenge and will use it to their
> advantage. (p. 82)

To deal with psychological barriers, senior women leaders advised aspiring women to focus

on improving their individual strengths and confidence. For instance, women leaders that

participated in Dietz (1997), Gatteau (2000), and Flanagan's (2002) dissertation studies as

well as those in Gerdes' (2003) survey emphasized that a future woman leader needs to know

herself, be herself, do her best, recognize her limitations, view things positively, establish

quality support systems, have confidence, use her strengths and advantages, and take

assertive actions.

This researcher found that while many opinion papers addressed the issue of

combining personal and professional lives for women, very few empirical studies focused on

strategies women leaders employed to overcome such barriers effectively. One of the

available studies by Villadsen and Tack (1986) focused on how women executives in public

four-year institutions juggled multiple family and career demands. Together they interviewed

20 female executives who had at least one child under 18. These women decision-makers

identified seven balancing strategies including "compartmentalization" (p. 172), which

required clear boundaries between home and work time. These women leaders made careful

arrangements for their family duties and tried not to allow their work to spill over to their

family life. "Delegation" and "lowered housekeeping standards" (p. 173) reduced women's burdens at home; these women used all the support structures they could get, including hiring full-time maids to help them meet their families' needs. "Physical and intellectual or artistic escape," "friendships and social contacts," "vacations," "(putting off) publishing," and "continuing education" (pp. 173-174) either helped women cope with the stress or helped them set priorities to make the balancing act possible. After studying 14 women presidents and vice presidents, Anglis (1990) obtained similar conclusions and emphasized the strategy of time management for combining personal and professional obligations.

When an individual president (Ball, 1991) and the 32 women CEOs in Touchton, Shavlik, and Davis' (1991) study shared their strategies for overcoming personal barriers, they stated that the key to success was creativity during the negotiation process so that their needs and workable solutions were included in the final financial packages. These smart, busy, and experienced women knew that housing, entertainment staffing assistance for university events, live-in help for children or elderly parents, custodial assistance or a contract housekeeper, groundkeeping, maintenance, or even involuntary separation were all possible issues that presidential candidates should raise. To them, the most effective way to solve the problem of geographical immobility was to put it on the table and ask for the university's assistance. The four women college presidents interviewed by Rosynsky (2002) also emphasized the importance of effective negotiation, having a very supportive "significant other" and family members, and establishing quality support networks for successful balance between personal and professional lives.

Senior administrative and academic women leaders who participated in Gerdes' (2003) study offered a wide range of advice that can help women overcome individual

barriers. Some of their suggestions were "stand up for yourself…develop confidence…do what's good for you…follow your values…be yourself…do what you love…have high aspirations…do your best…and have fun, a sense of humor, and friends" (pp. 272-274). These women also suggested that women choose their partners carefully, negotiate and establish support networks, and have no or few children.

Individual scholars and practitioners also offered general recommendations such as choosing family-friendly environments (Dietz, 1997; Marshall, 2002); securing quality caregivers (Hensel, 1991); obtaining social support from mentors and networks (O'Laughlin & Bischoff, 2001); fostering positive attitudes to increase confidence (Ausejo, 1993); being assertive and speaking up (Dickson, 2000); making part-time arrangements for child care (Schreiber, 1998); and using time effectively, including time for stress relief (Jones, 1993). All in all, findings available from both empirical studies and women's experiences verified the existence of personal obstacles that can impede women's progress in higher education administration.

<center>Professional Barriers and Coping Strategies</center>

As documented previously, senior women leaders in higher education still operate in a male-dominated environment. The majority of board members, line administrators, and faculty leaders are white males. Women in leadership positions are not only in the minority but also are often viewed as "outsiders." Therefore, they are challenged with complex institutional barriers of great magnitude and profundity. The remaining questions are: Do women leaders find it easy to establish themselves as legitimate leaders? Do they find it easy to function effectively? What barriers have they experienced as they step into a predominantly "man's" world?

*Professional Barriers to Success*

Women in higher education administration have repeatedly reported negative experiences at all levels, that is, interpersonal, institutional, and societal levels. In this study, all such barriers will be described as "professional barriers." As shown in Figure 2 based on a comprehensive review of relevant literature, these three types of professional barriers have been identified: structural, cultural, and political barriers.

Figure 2

*Professional Barriers to Success*
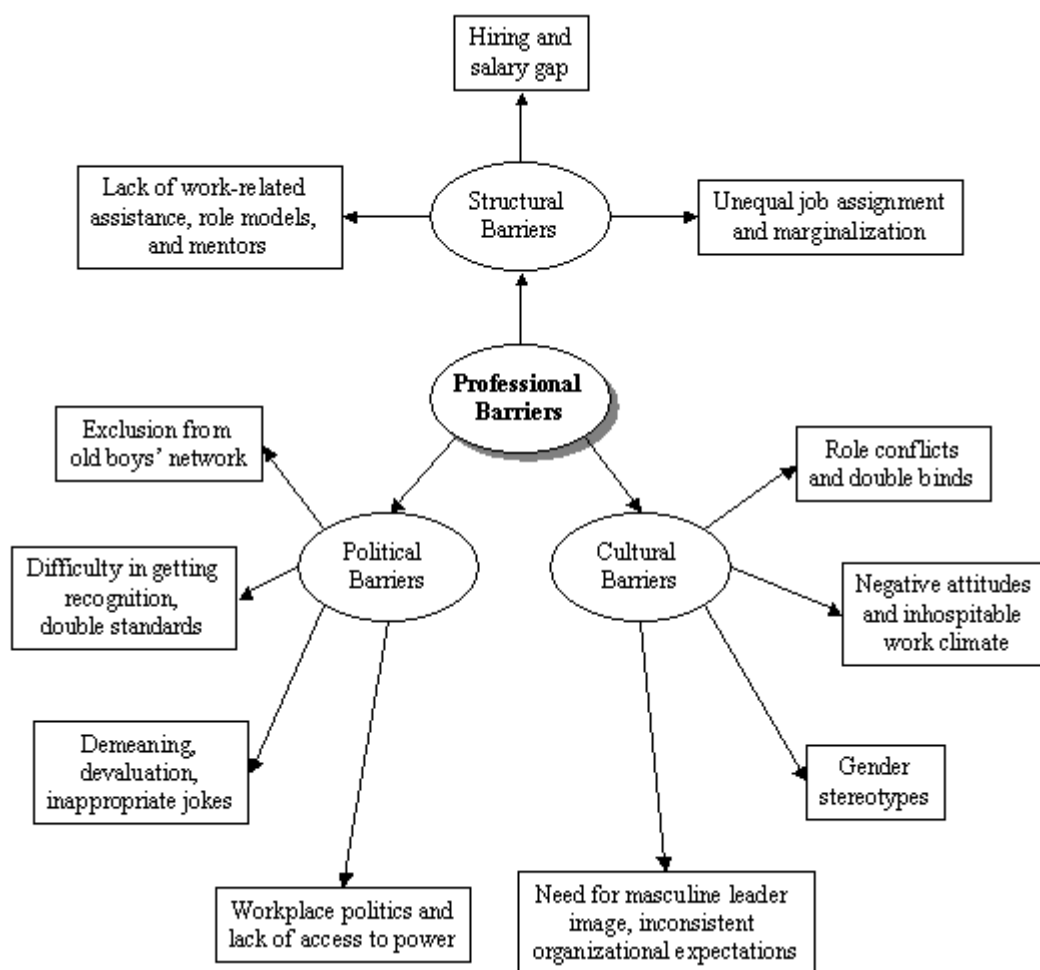


*Note.* For sources of different professional barriers, please refer to Appendix VIII, p. 243.

The first type of barriers, structural barriers, include sex segregation in occupations, promotions, positions, and earnings, among others; these barriers are more obvious and can be more easily measured. Konrad and Pfeffer (1991), for instance, used the Duncan segregation indexes to analyze the College and University Personnel Association's 1978 and 1983 annual compensation data. As they examined the hiring patterns, they found that some positions in colleges and universities were segregated by gender. To produce gender integration in 1978, 42% of the men and women in higher education administration had to change jobs. Five years later, that percentage dropped slightly to 37%. They also found that women were more likely to be hired for lower-paying and lower-level jobs.

Other scholars reported gender stratification of college and university employees as well (Johnsrud, 1991; Johnsrud & Heck, 1994; Kulis, 1997; Moore, 1984; Sagaria, 1988; Tinsley, 1986). After conducting a national study on male and female administrators in four-year institutions, Moore (1984) reported that "Women…seem to be able to build careers in some tracks more easily than in others (p. 7)," that they were more likely to be "pocketed" (p. 13) in certain positions, and that they were less likely to be promoted as principal line administrators. After Tinsley (1986) reviewed the literature available at that time, she concluded that most women administrators in higher education were still doing "women's work" and that they were "far more likely to be assistants to, assistants, or associates than they were to be directors, deans, vice presidents, provosts, or presidents" (p. 7).

As to the effect of gender on administrative promotion patterns and outcomes, Johnsrud (1991) conducted a three-year study on men and women administrators in a large research university and found that women gained significantly less return from administrative promotions than men administrators did. A further analysis of the same data

set by Johnsrud and Heck (1994) showed that gender had both an initial and a subsequent negative impact on the status and responsibility of employees even though females in the study had equivalent education and more experience than their male counterparts. They handled measurably more job responsibilities with significantly lower salaries. To make matters worse, the stratification and wage gap was perpetuated and widened over time. Many women executives interviewed by Thompson-Stacy (1995) in her dissertation study also reported being paid less than men for comparable work.

In addition to visible structural obstacles, women leaders experienced more intangible cultural bias in the workplace. Socio-cultural barriers such as gender stereotypes, negative attitudes about women in leadership positions, or an inhospitable organizational climate are often products of the widely accepted traditional ideas about men, women, and leadership. In Jablonski's (1996) qualitative study, for instance, seven female college presidents from the Northeast described the negative impact that the traditional masculine leader image has on female leaders. According to Jablonski (1996), women presidents promoted a participatory leadership style to empower others, but male-dominated board members and faculty leaders (including males and females) did not support such a style because they expect strong, assertive, and aggressive traditional leaders.

Besides discrepancies between the expectations of men and women leaders, challenges such as having to deal with double standards and stereotyping were reported by 11 women college presidents or chancellors interviewed by Sturnick (1999). Another potential bias for women was affirmative action. Although affirmative action was often cited as a remedy for unequal employment opportunity, Collins (1998) found that the implementation of affirmative action could have both a positive and a negative impact on women.

Specifically, women will be viewed as either a "token" hire or as a qualified, ideal selection depending on whether they were hired under the protection of affirmative action or not.

The conflict of women's social and professional roles produced problems for women as well (Sandler, 1986). For instance, the "double bind" refers to the dilemma of having to fulfill the traditional masculine image of serving as a good leader and the image of being a good woman (Curry, 2000; Jones, 1993; Sturnick, 1991; Tedrow & Rhoads, 1998). On the one hand, a female's ability to lead was questioned if she did not follow the male pattern of leadership. On the other hand, her leadership was criticized and resisted if her behaviors contradicted with the traditional model of a nice, good, virtuous woman (Jablonski, 1996; Sandler, 1986; Wajcman, 1998).

While male leaders can simply "be themselves" and easily establish their legitimacy, female leaders have to struggle between two incompatible roles and find a way to balance skillfully between them. The six female vice presidents interviewed by Cline (1996), for instance, expressed their frustration over the fact that they received totally opposite feedback when exerting similar behaviors as their male counterparts. Take assertion, for example. They witnessed men being praised and rewarded for being assertive but had to put up with criticisms for their being "pushy" or "bitchy."

The last category of obstacles emerged from the struggle over power and status between men and women. Political conflicts over positions, ranks, resources, influence, information, and alliances between men and women are often hidden, yet real. Stokes (1984), for instance, selected 23 possible barriers reported in the literature and asked 240 women administrators working in nine Florida universities to identify which ones they had encountered. Of the 168 women (70%) who responded, half or more of them had experienced

19 of the 23 barriers. Of the 19 barriers, four were experienced by more than 80% of the respondents. The top four barriers were less access to power (89%), exclusion from informal networks (87%), having to work twice as hard (87%), and difficulties in receiving recognition (81%). In terms of frequency, the two most commonly experienced barriers were having to work twice as hard and less access to power. With less access to power, information, and recognition or resources, these women felt they had to work much harder to be effective or to survive.

Similarly, Kanter (1993) documented how women were excluded from informal networks after they entered managerial positions, how men in power did not feel comfortable dealing with women, and how existing managers' "homosocial reproduction" (p. 63) can have a negative impact on women. The exclusion of women from the old boys' networks means that women have to find other ways to connect with those in power to obtain the resources and support they need. They often have to take the initiative to help board members feel comfortable working with them as well.

To determine whether men and women leaders have different workplace experiences, Zanville (2001) analyzed 298 questionnaires received from government, business, professional, education, and community leaders in Texas. When these men and women leaders were asked if they were treated fairly by their superiors, their responses differed consistently. While most men believed that their superiors' behaviors were fair, about 30% of the women leaders reported being treated differently in the credence given to their opinions, performance judgment, promotional opportunities, and advice given. Slightly more than half of these women leaders felt that they were treated unequally in at least one of the four areas.

In brief, since leadership and management are still considered male domains, women today continue to be at a disadvantage and are still facing visible and invisible obstacles that hinder them from achieving success easily. Most men are unaware of such differences because the higher education system was designed and maintained based on their strengths, life style, and "ways of doing things." While different experiences at work for men and women continue to attract the attention of scholars and practitioners, the question of what women can do to handle such problems has been raised repeatedly. Given the lack of adequate answers to this critical question, this researcher decided to conduct a qualitative inquiry on strategies senior women leaders use to confront problems created in a gendered working environment that then will lead to success in leadership posts within the academy.

*Strategies for Overcoming Professional Barriers*

Given the long patriarchal history of American higher education and the gendered society in which it resides, the higher education environment has been less friendly to women than men (Benokraitis, 1998; Bond, 2000; Chliwniak, 1997; Martin, 2000; Morris, 2002; Munford & Rumball, 2000; Nidiffer, 2001a, 2003; Ronning, 2000; Ropers-Huilman & Shackelford, 2003; Ropers-Huilman & Taliaferro, 2003; Zemsky, 2001). Consequently, to succeed, women must be able to maneuver around the previously described interpersonal, organizational, and societal barriers.

*Dealing with Structural Barriers*

Scholars and women leaders have offered some additional tips that can help women deal with structural barriers such as hiring, the salary gap, and marginalization. According to Johnsrud and Heck (1994), to avoid structural barriers, such as stratification or marginalization, women should actively seek different opportunities to demonstrate a variety

of skills. Seeking sponsorship and creation of new positions were two other strategies commonly used by women in Johnsrud's (1991) study. The 84 senior academic and administrative women leaders recommended avoiding the service trap; learning to say "no;" being aware of negative, hidden attitudes toward women; working hard; and doing one's best as effective individual strategies for combating structural barriers. Cook's (2001) solutions to the problem of being irreplaceable in a position were to train a successor or to restructure the work for others to complete more easily.

In terms of strategies for avoiding gender bias in hiring practices, Thompson-Stacy (1995) interviewed 20 female executives and concluded with the following five most commonly used strategies: improving one's negotiation skills, benchmarking, improving interpersonal communication skills with male colleagues, networking, and using male as well as female mentors. Fenkins' (1994) keys to negotiation success included "keep things simple, structure your presentation, anticipate objections, build in some sacrifices, don't try to score all the points, meet resistance flexibly, don't give away the store, and rise above politics" (pp. 107-108).

Rose and Danner (1998) not only emphasized the importance of negotiating an appropriate initial salary to obtain equal pay for women faculty, but also proposed these four salary negotiation strategies for women in academia: doing your work by researching comparative salary information diligently, seeking multiple opinions about what is usual and what is possible, developing connections that increase your pay expectations as well as your negotiation skills, and strategically planning the negotiation process. Some of their strategic tactics included focusing on personal wants and professional needs that are congruent with the institution's mission, using another job offer to increase one's bargaining power,

developing recognition and relationships at professional events, assessing how one's talents fit the institution's needs, and knowing what to negotiate.

*Dealing with Cultural Barriers*

Dietz (1997) took a cultural approach to explore 10 senior women leaders' experience at a public university in one southeastern state. She found that even when these women "paid their dues," (p. 113), they still did not gain full membership in the dominant culture and often had to work in an inhospitable atmosphere. According to Dietz (1997), "It is apparent that many of the men in both mid-level and senior management are struggling to accept women as peers on multiple levels of consciousness" (p. 114), and these women "were never wholly part of the group and they were well aware of it" (p. 102).

As a result, executive women leaders in Dietz (1997), Rosynsky (2002), Thompson-Stacy (1995), and Zakery's (1991) dissertation studies all stressed the importance of knowing the culture of one's institution and shared some strategies they employed to deal with this critical issue. Except for using all possible and creative mentoring strategies to adapt to the existing culture, they especially emphasized the strategy of taking the initiative to help their male counterparts feel comfortable working with them. Women were advised to learn to relate to men on subjects with which they felt comfortable.

For women to blend culturally into the predominantly male environment as well as to avoid the "double-bind" barrier, the most common solution recorded in the literature was the strategy of androgyny or balancing between role-related and gender-related expectations (Gerdes, 2003; Harter, 1993; Tedrow & Rhoads, 1999; Twombly, 1999; Yoder, 2001). The 84 senior women leaders and faculty members in Gerdes' (2003) survey, for instance, noted the significance of not being too feminine or too masculine. According to Tedrow and

Rhoads (1998, 1999), many senior women administrators in community colleges used the strategy of constant evaluation of the gender dynamics of different situations or events and application of gender knowledge and skills accordingly.

As Harter (1993) shared her secrets of presidential success, she emphasized the importance for women to develop and demonstrate both feminine and masculine competencies. According to Yoder (2001), the traditional male leadership style will bring women more problems than benefits. She believed that women should instead use both status-enhancing and status-leveling strategies to be effective. Her specific recommendations for women included active listening, being humorous and respectful of others, adopting team work, conforming to group procedures first to accumulate credits before trying to influence and change the group, becoming exceptionally competent, and avoiding dominant speech.

For the issue of narrowly defined leader image, value-driven women leaders in Flanagan's (2002) study reported that their core values and their confidence in what they were doing enabled them to face the fear of resistance from different constituents and move on. As the first women president at Queens College, City University of New York, Dr. Shirley Kenny (1991) experienced a tremendous amount of skepticism from local media and from both male and female constituents as well. She wisely responded to the initial resistance with calmness and acceptance. She knew things would settle down, and she learned that successful presidents must be able to bear criticism. In her interview with Shinn (2002), Dr. Donna Shalala, President of the University of Miami, also contended that the best way to confront skepticism was to do a great job to surprise those who were dubious.

*Dealing with Political Barriers*

Since women are socialized to be submissive and powerless, most of them not only view words such as "politics" and "strategies" as dirty but also feel uncomfortable talking about them openly (Albino, 1992; Thompson-Stacy, 1995). Since women have been socialized to be powerless, many of them do not know how to play the political game. However, the fact that higher education is a very political environment with competing interests leaves women leaders with no choice but to learn to be political (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Clemons, 1998; Cline, 1996; Gatteau, 2000). The remaining question is how do women connect to the old boys to secure the support needed for their success?

To find out how politics affected the career advancement of women administrators in New Jersey's public and private colleges and universities, Russo (1986) surveyed 117 women administrators. Approximately one-third of the respondents were top-level leaders, while the rest were mid-level administrators. She found that, in order of frequency, women administrators used expert, legitimate, information, reward, and referent power bases. Popular political strategies used, in order of frequency, were alliance formation, visibility, networking, bargaining, coalition formation, mentoring, maneuverability, power plays, immediate access to powerful people, control of information, compromise, and persuasion.

Ropers-Huilman (1998) reminded women leaders that power and leadership have multiple forms and strategies. For women to become politically savvy, they must first know what kinds of power they possess and how they can use their influence skillfully and effectively. Similarly, advice offered by senior women leaders interviewed by Clemons (1998), Cline (1996), and Thompson-Stacy (1995) was to be knowledgeable about the power bases on which they as well as other major players have relied. To be politically savvy,

women leaders must be willing to spend time identifying and analyzing the political situation and plan a strategy to confront their opponents, when necessary.

After Bashaw and Nidiffer (2002) examined women administrators' careers in higher education, they found three political strategies women leaders often use to pursue their goals. First, these senior women leaders were observant and formed strong male alliances to remain in power as well as to accomplish their goals. Second, they were highly skilled at fundraising. Last, they were flexible with a repertoire of different strategies that allowed them to maneuver around different roadblocks to, at least, partially fulfill their goals.

English (2000) studied five women administrators and found that they dealt with the roadblocks by "assuming different roles, playing the game, and picking battles wisely" (p. 242). Other scholars and women leaders viewed the art of negotiation as a crucial strategy for women administrators to overcome political barriers as well. For women leaders in Cline's (1996) study, the art of assessment and negotiation was part of their administrative life as in "when to take a step back, when to duck, and when to dodge" (p. 136). To explore further the "battling strategies" women used, Clemons (1998) interviewed 10 women leaders in a western state. She concluded her study with these six commonly used negotiation strategies: "gathering information, delivering information, employing maneuvers, selecting battle weapons or tools, using allies/advisors, and using emotion" (p. 83).

When devalued by the good old boys' networks as a woman with power, one of the women leaders in Dietz's (1997) study used male subordinate and supervisors to overcome this barrier, while another woman accepted men's "protection" to get needed information. Other solutions to the issue of devaluation of women's works proposed by scholars (Carli, 1998; Cook, 2001) included documenting their achievements from the first day, taking credit

for their ideas and successes, participating in and obtaining support from both female and mixed-gender networks, and working on interdepartmental projects to demonstrate ability as well as to increase visibility.

Other personal sharing on solutions to political obstacles included breaking through the informal information network by establishing one's own networking arenas, being political without losing one's integrity, being healthy and strong enough to bear a great amount of stress, learning to relax and be themselves (Harter, 1993), finding advocates and mentors (Growe & Montgomery, 1999; Guteck, 2001; Lynch, 1990), taking risks (Growe & Montgomery, 1999; Sturnick, 1999), creating individual as well as institutional ties and alliances (Growe & Montgomery, 1999), negotiation and delegation (Lynch, 1990), and enhancing the status as well as legitimacy of women as leaders (Growe & Montgomery, 1999; Yoder, 2001).

## Summary

In brief, a review of previous literature resulted in a very incomplete picture of the status and experiences of senior women leaders in American higher education with regards to what it takes for women to achieve and remain in highly visible, powerful leadership positions. At the end of her dissertation study, Cline (1996) affirmed, "An enormous amount of work still needs to be done…to expand this incomplete knowledge by exploring obstacles to success" (p. 194). Other doctoral researchers (Anglis, 1990; Cline, 1996; Dietz, 1997; Flanagan, 2002; Rosynsky, 2002; Thompson-Stacy, 1995; Zakery, 1991) also agreed that many questions about what it takes for women to become effective and successful leaders in higher education remain unanswered. They all recommended additional inquiries into how women have successfully addressed issues such as gender stereotypes, exclusion from the old

boys' networks, and women's strategies for success to expand the knowledge base on successful women leaders in higher education.

Without doubt, collecting strategies for women to use in overcoming different obstacles experienced in higher education administration is necessary and important. Nevertheless, some scholars argued about the unfairness of women leaders being forced to "react" to the male-dominated cultural and political environment (Carli & Eagly, 2001; Dietz, 1997; Tedrow & Rhoads, 1999; Yoder, 2001). Having to build such a complex repertoire of skills and strategies in order to be accepted and included fully not only consumes women leaders' time, energy, and morale but also delays the success of both individual women leaders and their institutions.

To make matters worse, some women leaders get tired of playing the political game and resent the tremendous amount of responsibilities, demands, and stress placed on them. As a result, they leave the executive positions or even the education profession (Die, 1999; Dietz, 1997; Harris, Lowery, & Arnold, 2002; Jones, 1993; Marshall, 1994; Schmuck, Hollingsworth, & Lock, 2002; Sturnick, 1991). However, the continual development and transformation of American higher education at the dawn of the 21st century need the participation, leadership, and contributions of the majority of the community—women (Fretwell, 1991; MIT, 2001). Therefore, all possible means should be used to stop the loss of women's talents as well as to support, inspire, and encourage more women to choose higher education leadership as a profession, including expanding the knowledge base on success strategies and tactics for women in the academy, which is why this research endeavor was initiated.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Why and how have some women, despite the many implicit and explicit personal as well as professional barriers reported in the literature by researchers, practitioners, and scholars, managed to secure and remain in powerful leadership positions in the academy? What are their secrets of career success? What problems once troubled them, and how did they overcome various large and small obstacles in their careers? What are their insights about women in leadership, and what advice can they offer to future leaders? Given the open-ended, exploratory, inductive nature of the inquiry, the researcher decided to employ a qualitative phenomenological strategy for the current study. In Chapter Three the author will provide further details and explanations of the research methodology through use of the following four sections: research design, sites and participant selection, research questions, and research procedures.

Research Design

Based on Patton's (2002) classification of types of research, this study was an applied one since the purpose was to "understand the nature and sources of human and social problems" (p. 224), the focus was to answer "questions deemed important by society" (p. 224); and the anticipated results included suggestions for actions or interventions that can improve social circumstances with limited application context (Patton, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). This research resulted in the identification of barriers that nine senior women leaders in public four-year universities in the United States experienced, as well as strategies that helped them overcome different obstacles in various situations.

At the 1998 World Conference on Higher Education, Ronning (2000) emphasized how in-depth studies can more effectively tackle persisting and complicated social

phenomena, such as the under-representation of women at the decision-making level in society. Since the purpose and research problem of the study were more exploratory and understanding-oriented than deductive and explanation-oriented (Creswell, 2002), the qualitative approach was more appropriate.

Qualitative research, as defined by Creswell (1998), is:

an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. (p. 15)

Among the five traditions of qualitative research (Creswell, 1998), phenomenological inquiry is most suitable for this study because its purpose was to "investigate the meaning of the lived experience of a small group of people from the standpoint of a concept or phenomenon" (Schram, 2003, p. 70), and its goal was to understand more about the essence and underlying meanings of the shared experiences of a small group of people. The intent of this phenomenological inquiry was to understand the meaning and essence of the complex and holistic lived experiences of nine successful senior women leaders. The researcher relied on internal themes that emerged from in-depth interviews to describe the "structure" of the socially constructed phenomenon.

In terms of theory use, Creswell (1998) explained how social science theories might be employed to "provide an explanation, a prediction, and a generalization about how the world operates" (p. 84). As mentioned in Chapter Two, several theories, such as Kimmel's (2004) notion of a gendered society, Acker's (1992, 2004) theory of gender role and gendered organization, and Kanter's (1994) theory of tokenism have potential relevance to this study. Although relevant background knowledge obtained through the literature review helped the researcher form initial research questions, a "loosely structured" design was

utilized to explore this recent, under-studied phenomenon to preserve as much as possible the most valuable assets of this qualitative inquiry: the informants' voices and success stories for the benefit of future women leaders in higher education (Glesne, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

<div align="center">Site and Participant Selection</div>

According to the most recent national statistics available (U. S. Department of Education, 2003a), women in higher education leadership were particularly under-represented at the executive/administrative/managerial level in public four-year institutions. As shown in Table 3, when compared with other types of institutions, public four-year universities had the lowest percentage of female executives/administrators/managers in the fall of 2001. Researchers also found that independent universities and community colleges were more hospitable to women than public universities (Brown, 2000; Etaugh, 1986; Tedrow & Rhoads, 1999; Twombly, 1993; Warner & DeFleur, 1993). Hence, determining how some senior women leaders manage to succeed in the four-year public higher education environment is essential to the recruitment and retention of women executives in the academy.

Table 3

*Percentage of Female Executives/Administrators/Managers, by Institutional Type: Fall 2001*

|  | Public 4-Year | Public 2-year | Private 4-Year | Private 2-Year | Private not-for-Profit 4-Year |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Female executives/ administrators/managers | 44.2% | 49.4% | 50.1% | 55.5% | 50.1% |

*Note.* Source: U.S. Department of Education, 2003a, Table 227.

The targeted participants in this dissertation study were executive women administrators who occupied "senior-level positions such as president, chancellor, vice president, provost, dean or their equivalents" (Twombly & Rosser, 2002, p. 459) at public 4-year universities. To find potential participants for the study, the researcher first used the *2005 Directory of Higher Education* to identify all women presidents, vice presidents, and other cabinet-level senior executives in a selected state within the United States. To learn from the best, all women presidents within the state were invited to join this research endeavor. For women vice presidents and other cabinet officers, the researcher used recommendations from "insiders" as well as variation in ethnicity, positions, and types of institutions to select suitable informants for this study.

As a result, a total of 12 senior women leaders were invited to participate in the current study. With endorsement from the Executive Board of a state network affiliated with the Office of Women in Higher Education (OWHE) of the American Council on Education, a formal letter from the state coordinator was sent to 12 women presidents and vice presidents to encourage their participation in this study. The researcher then sent out her own cover letter (Appendix II), together with a sample interview guide (Appendix III) and an informed consent form (Appendix IV) to orient targeted informants with the research and to invite them, once again, to participate in the research project. The return rate was 75%. Of the 12 potential informants, 9 agreed to participate in a two-hour personal interview with the researcher.

## Research Questions

The guiding question of this research study was as follows: "What does it take for women leaders in public 4-year public institutions of higher education to succeed and to

overcome various challenges or barriers in their careers?" The underlying assumption was that due to the extremely demanding and political nature of the higher education environment, for women to secure and remain successful in powerful positions, they must first be able to triumph over various personal, family-related, interpersonal, institutional, and societal challenges. The question was: How do they manage to triumph over adversities encountered on their paths to success, and what important lessons can be learned from their lived experiences? Under this overriding question were the following five key research questions:

1. What factors have contributed to their success today?

2. What institutional, family, or personal challenges have they encountered as they strive for career success?

3. What strategies or skills have they employed to overcome various barriers to success?

4. As they reflect on their careers in higher education administration, do they perceive gender as a factor that has an impact on their lived experiences? If so, how? If not, why not?

5. What insights or advice do they have for other current or aspiring women leaders to help them succeed as top-level decision-makers in higher education?

To elicit detailed and in-depth descriptions of the context and the process of these women's successful experiences in higher education administration, more open-ended interview questions were developed under each key research question. See Appendix III on page 237 for the Sample Interview Guide. To ensure the appropriateness and clarity of the

questions as well as the effectiveness of the interview protocol, the researcher pilot-tested the

research instrument with two senior women leaders in the field (Seidman, 1998). Based on

experiences and recommendations obtained from the two pilot studies as well as advice from

an experienced researcher, the sample interview guide was refined and affirmed before the

researcher entered the field formally for further exploration (Brause, 2000; Glesne, 1998).

<div align="center">Research Procedures</div>

Following the principle of triangulation for qualitative research studies (Creswell,

1998, 2002; Patton, 2002), the researcher collected and utilized multiple sources of data, such

as personal curriculum vitae, archival reports or documents, demographic survey responses,

field notes, and transcripts from in-depth personal interviews. Efforts devoted to the

refinement of the research instrument and to incorporation of personal background

information into the interview yielded very satisfactory results of more than 350 pages of

single-spaced verbatim and useful data. Finally, to ensure the validity and credibility of the

findings drawn from the study, the researcher invited all nine participants as well as an

external auditor to review and confirm the accuracy of information provided (e.g., from

transcripts to stories, to findings). Detailed research procedures will be introduced below

under the subtitles of data collection, data analysis, and validity and credibility.

<div align="center">*Data Collection*</div>

Based on Creswell's (1998) recommendation for phenomenological studies, nine in-

depth private interviews were conducted. Knowing the importance of preserving natural

contexts for qualitative study (Patton, 1990, 2002; Schram, 2003), the researcher studied

selected informants in their natural settings. Because building trust with and showing respect

to these successful women were equally important, the researcher asked the participants to

identify where they wanted to be interviewed. Of the nine informants, eight decided to share their stories in their offices, while one preferred having the interview in a restaurant.

Before the process of individual interviews was initiated, the researcher collected as much background information as possible about each individual and her institution through Internet searches and through reviewing a personal vita provided by each informant. For personal data that could neither be found in the personal vita nor on the web, a brief confidential demographic survey (Appendix V) was used during the interviews to secure all essential personal and professional background information about the participants. Before each personal interview took place, the researcher reviewed all available, relevant data to gain more familiarity with each informant, as well as her institution, and to be able to add a more personal touch to the inquiry.

The open-ended interview questions used in the study focused on barriers that senior women leaders experienced and strategies they employed to overcome the barriers while maintaining their leadership effectiveness. To encourage participants to share more insights and details during the interviews, the researcher listened attentively with respect, compassion, flexibility, and good will (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000; Gay & Airasian, 2000; Seidman, 1998). Since the targeted informants were women in positions of power and experts in the field, for the interview to be successful, Marshall and Rossman (1999) and Patton (2002) recommended use of a more interactive and flexible interview style to increase productivity and the quality of obtained data.

According to the policy of the Graduate School at Eastern Michigan University, before entering the field for qualitative data collection, the researcher must comply with the Human Subjects Review policy and obtain approval (Appendix I). All interviews were audio

taped and transcribed confidentially by the researcher for data analysis. To ensure anonymity of the informants and to protect them from harm, during the course of transcribing the confidential interviews, any names or references that might expose the identity of the participants were replaced with pseudonyms. Moreover, interview tapes, research data, and other sensitive materials were handled carefully and kept under lock and key in the researcher's home. Once the project was completed, all materials were either erased or destroyed immediately.

When addressing good practice of observations in the field, most scholars stressed the importance of field notes. As defined by Bogdan and Biklen (2003), field notes are "the written account of what the researcher hears, sees, experiences, and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the data in a qualitative study" (pp. 110-111). The researcher understood that she should enter the field with an open mind and try to see things through the participants' eyes. During the course of the interviews, the researcher actively observed both the informants and the sites. Both descriptive and reflective field notes were taken to help the researcher more effectively grasp what was observed, sensed, experienced, perceived, and reflected during and after each interview in the field. The day after each interview, the researcher sent an individual email message to thank each informant for her time and assistance.

*Data Analysis*

Given the fact that qualitative inquiries produce volumes of data, the issues of organizing and reducing transcriptions must be tackled first before successful analysis or interpretation is possible (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Creswell, 1998, 2002). To gain a holistic view of the width and depth of raw data, the researcher first

read through all 350 pages of single-spaced transcriptions. To reduce the amount of raw data, the researcher then read the transcripts for a second time with the five key research questions in mind. Following Patton's (2002) advice, during the second review, the researcher used numbers, colors, and sticky notes to identify and categorize collected data for further analysis, while irrelevant data were put aside temporarily.

Since qualitative inquiry strives to portray a "holistic picture" of the complex phenomenon "to understand the fundamental nature of a particular set of activities and people in a specific context" (Patton, 2002, p. 480), the challenge is to describe and explain the subjectively constructed multiple realities of everyday life experiences that can shun "critical evaluation of forms of social life" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 192). Consequently, the researcher began the data-sorting and analysis process with the individual interviews and profiles by reviewing the individual woman leader's background information and interview transcript to identify repetitious ideas as well as important points made.

For each interview, a long list of relevant, recurring phrases or important points made by each informant was developed. Ideas or phrases most frequently mentioned or emphasized were incorporated into the title of the individual profile for each informant. Through constant reading, comparing, connecting, grouping, and regrouping, the long list of relevant and important repeating ideas was then clustered and integrated into four categories: success factors, barriers and challenges, coping strategies, and views on women in leadership before each individual profile was prepared (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003).

Similarly, to find emergent themes for this study without losing sight of the original words or patterns of actions utilized by the participants, the researcher "immersed" herself in collected data for the third time by constantly reviewing, comparing, connecting, integrating,

and explaining data until abstractions, concepts, and themes were inductively built from details (Creswell, 1998, 2002; Seidman, 1998; Wolcott, 2001). To keep track of identified recurring similarities among all nine cases, a matrix of a combined list of 79 repeating ideas was developed (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Creswell, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994). To distinguish the frequency with which the concepts were mentioned, the researcher used colors to code responses cited by all nine informants versus those identified by only a few of them.

As Patton (2002) noted, the biggest challenge for the qualitative analyst is to determine which ideas fit together and to sort them into categories. Through constant reviewing, comparing, grouping, regrouping, clustering, and integrating of the combined, cross-case repeating ideas, the researcher gradually narrowed all the recurring regularities down to six major themes and 12 sub-themes (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Creswell, 1998, 2002; Seidman, 1998; Wolcott, 2001). All major themes were salient because all informants, or at least eight of the nine participants, highlighted them. As for the 12 sub-themes, all were emphasized by at least six of the nine informants and were, thus, worthwhile for reporting.

*Validity and Credibility*

To establish validity and credibility for the study, different measures were implemented. For internal validity, member check was used. The researcher first made sure that all research findings drawn from this study were grounded in the informants' perspectives by citing and using verbatim interview statements frequently. Then the results were sent to participating women leaders for validation. All the interviewees received a thank-you letter (Appendix VI) from the researcher and were invited to review and confirm the accuracy of the construction of their individual profiles as well as the salient themes

reported by the researcher. Only a third of the nine informants requested minor revisions with their presented success stories.

As an external validity check for the current study, the researcher invited an objective, independent, external auditor with doctoral-level training and experiences in conducting qualitative inquiry to review the research findings. This external auditor reviewed a sample of the interview transcripts and compared them against relevant individual profiles and emerging themes to make sure that no distortion existed and that no unreasonable interpretation had been made of obtained data. As a result, the external auditor affirmed the credibility and trustworthiness of this study. Only a couple of very minor changes were made after a short discussion between the researcher and the external auditor.

In brief, the technique of triangulation (i.e., the use of multiple data sources and evaluation methods) was used to ensure the reliability and credibility of this study. The researcher constantly compared and contrasted all of the above mentioned data sources. To preserve the success stories of each informant, the researcher first analyzed data about each woman leader to prepare an individual profile for each participant. Cross-case analysis was then conducted to capture salient themes that emerged from the study. Both internal and external reviewers were used to monitor the quality of the data-collection and analysis processes to establish corroboration of evidence for significant findings and conclusions drawn in the study (Creswell, 1998, 2002; Patton, 2002).

CHAPTER IV: PROFILES OF NINE SENIOR WOMEN LEADERS

Chapter Four is composed of two sections. The first part will provide a composite profile of the nine higher education women executives who participated in the study; interesting commonalities and differences as well as striking personal and professional attributes will be described. The second part is composed of nine individual profiles, based on in-depth interviews with the researcher. To protect the anonymity of informants, easily identifiable information has been purposefully excluded, modified, or replaced with pseudonyms.

Composite Profile

Although many of these cabinet-level women leaders humbly describe themselves the beneficiaries of the road paved by pioneering women who came before them, all agree that they would not be where they are today without a consistent track record of success and contributions to the academy. The nine participants are cabinet-level executives: two serve in presidential positions, six are vice presidents, and one serves as a presidential executive. According to the 2000 Carnegie Classification of Higher Education Institutions, 6 of the informants serve on the executive leadership team of research extensive universities while three of them serve at Master's Colleges and Universities I.

While some of the respondents are still adjusting to their relatively new leadership roles and responsibilities, more than half of them had already held their current posts for more than five years by the time they were interviewed. The average length of years in higher education administration for all research participants is 22 ½ years. Of the nine women executives, two were recruited from outside the field of higher education and one from another higher education institution. The other six women were promoted from within

after serving their universities for 9 to 30 years. Four of the nine women leaders have very deep and special attachments to the universities for which they work because of their alumni status.

The majority of the respondents (78%) have achieved terminal degrees in their fields while two have obtained master's and bachelor's degrees. Five majored in education or higher education administration, whereas four specialized in disciplines ranging from the sciences to business administration. Fifty-six percent (5 of 9) of them are full professors with tenure, while four serve as "at will" administrators. Of the five full professors, two once served as department heads. Five of the 9 (56%) women leaders succeed as first-generation college students. Of the four second-generation students in this study, three are also the youngest while the fourth one is the most senior in terms of age in the group.

Ages of these successful women range from mid-forties to mid-sixties, with their average age being 56 years old. Two were born before 1946, and seven were "baby boomers" born between 1946 and 1964. Two thirds (6 of 9) of the respondents are Caucasian, and one third (3 of 9) are from minority groups. Five of them (56%) are the first-born child; two are the middle child; and two are the youngest child in their families. Some of the most striking facts are related to their own family circumstances.

Of all the informants, five (56%) are currently married. Among the five married senior female executives, four (80%) are married without children. As for the other four women leaders, one remains single, and three are divorced with young or adult children. This means only one of the nine women leaders (11%) is able to have a successful career in higher education administration, a spouse, and children of her own. In terms of support from significant others, two of the nine women are enjoying support from their husbands because

they are now retired. The other three married female executives all have spouses who work as full-time employees and have their own commitments as well as responsibilities. None of the nine participants ever benefited from having a stay-at-home spouse to support their entire career progression.

How would life be different if they were men? A couple of the respondents refused to speculate, yet most believed that they would probably have a wife at home taking care of their offspring. Many believe that they are not alone in terms of lack of support from a spouse with regard to domestic responsibilities, and some expressed interest in knowing how they compare to women leaders at the national level. Thus, a comparison between the American Council on Education's data on American College and University Presidents (2001) and these research respondents' family circumstances was completed and is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

*Family Circumstances: A Comparison between the 2001 ACE Data on American College and University Presidents and the Nine Respondents in this Study*

| Category | Men Presidents | Women Presidents | Study Respondents |
|---|---|---|---|
| Were currently married | 90% | 59% | 56% |
| Had stay-at-home spouses | 48% | 26% | 22% |
| Had children | 91% | 67% | 44% |

*Note.* Source: ACE, Center for Policy Analysis, 2002, Appendix A.

The result shows that unlike men presidents, women presidents are much less likely to be currently married, to have stay-at-home spouses, or to have children. The situations facing women included in this study seem to be even worse. When compared with the

average male presidents in the nation, they are far less likely to have both a successful career in higher education and a marriage, not to mention the luxury of having a stay-at-home spouse to take care of their children.

<div align="center">Individual Profiles and Interviews</div>

To provide a vivid portrait of each informant as well as her success story, nine individual profiles will be presented. The most important success strategy utilized by each woman leader will be highlighted as part of the title of each personal profile. These profiles not only provide insight into the development of leadership attitudes and behaviors of these successful women leaders in the academy but also depict important meanings and aspects of these women's lives and experiences, ranging from factors that contributed to their success, barriers and challenges encountered in the workplace, coping strategies employed to overcome obstacles in their careers, to their views on women in leadership. Through detailed description of skills and strategies used by each individual woman leader, meaningful and practical success experiences and strategies are preserved to benefit aspiring leaders.

<div align="center">*Alice: Forging Strong Alliances*</div>

Alice serves as the president of a large private research university. She is married, has no children, and holds tenure as a faculty member. As the first-born child during the 1950s of a modest family in a small segregated town, Alice was expected to be nothing more than a secretary when she grew up. Seeing a college education as her "opportunity to have a different type of life," Alice not only became a first-generation college student, but also succeeded as a prominent leader at both institutional and national levels.

Prior to assuming her current position, she held multiple leadership roles at five other institutions of higher learning in the nation, moving from faculty member to mid-level

administrator to top-level executive positions. Her current success rests on an outstanding track record in a variety of university functions, including fundraising, academic affairs, accreditation, strategic planning, research and public service, human relations, and affirmative action initiatives. She is known for her belief in education and technology, her commitment to students, and her success in leading change. Her greatest satisfaction comes from the fact that she is "impacting lives in a positive way." When asked to summarize her journey in higher education administration, Alice energetically and assertively stated that her career has been "fun… fast-paced, exciting, nontraditional, and something I'm not ready to give up for a while."

*Success Factors*

Due to the lack of role models since childhood, she never considered the fact that girls could have options other than being teachers, nurses, or secretaries, not to mention top-level decision makers like principals or presidents. While her professional experiences revolved around six universities, she did not intentionally plan her career trajectory in the academy because "it's a lot of work and a lot of energy to learn a new school" plus "it's not in my gene pool." She believes that "constant moving is disruptive both to you and the organization," so she has always tried to "make a minimum of a five-year commitment."

Reflecting on her path to success, Alice credits the many mentors, role models, and friends who believed in her and encouraged her to take the next step at different stages of her life. She remembers how two of her former supervisors, both male, saw her potential and nudged her to start on the administrative track and to continue to move up. In order for her to participate in an interview for an entry-level administrative position that was scheduled on very short notice, her first supervisor volunteered to teach her class so she had no excuse not

to go. Just as Alice was enjoying her perfectly under-control life as a vice president for research, the second supervisor pushed her to expand her horizons further by assuming more and different responsibilities. Seeing how talented and decisive she was, he even tried to groom her to become the next president of that institution.

Other factors that help her succeed include:

> …good support from a lot of people, my own personal drive. I'm a driven woman, I mean, I'm a "Type A+++".… I really don't see myself as the most intelligent person or the brightest person, but I am persistent. I will continue to work. I have good human relations skills. I can work with a group. And I'm not afraid to learn something new.

To Alice, "good enough is not good enough." The only way to build trust and respect is to "win the confidence case." This strategy is particularly critical for women and minorities if they want to counter people's resistance to their advancement.

In addition to talking about exceptional performance, throughout our interview Alice kept emphasizing the importance of knowing oneself and building strong teams as well as political alliances. Being true to herself enables her to "seriously evaluate at the end of the day what went well and what didn't," so that she can "be open enough to build a team that complements her weaknesses, which is one of her keys to success. She told her leadership team that

> You're not sitting here to tell me "yes." You're sitting here to agree when it's the right thing to do and to verbally slap me up side the head and say that's really stupid, don't do it, or here's another way to think about it…. I mean you can't let your ego get to the point where you think that you know how to do everything.

Another key to success is forging strong support networks, alliances, and advocates. Knowing how decisive and effective she is as a leader, her alliances and advocates once worked together, without her knowing, to urge the president to have her replace the provost who could not make decisions. Different support systems have also helped her "insulate"

herself from criticisms and attacks. In reply to the question of whether she felt she was as successful and effective as she wanted to be, Alice humbly commented, "No, I've always got room to grow." To her, constant learning, self-evaluation, and professional development are not only lifelong goals but also her duties as a leader of learning communities.

*Barriers and Challenges*

In reflecting on obstacles encountered in her career, Alice provided some rather negative anecdotes and confessed, "Some days, you'd be lying if you said you didn't get angry about it." When she started her administrative career in a male-dominated field at a southern university, she encountered overt gender bias and resistance even during the interview process.

> …the interview team asked me questions that had nothing to do with what I was going to do…the guy definitely doing the interviewing, chairing the committee, did NOT want me. And so he said, "Well, tell me, Dr. Miller, what would you do if someone asked you to castrate a pig?" Now, that was very common back then, in the 1970s…And of course that was THE killer question in [the broad area of vocational agriculture]. And I said, "Well, I would call someone who knew how to do that, that's not in my job description." And I had a few other questions of that ilk. So I left there thinking I'd never get the job.

As expected, the chair of the interview committee did not recommend hiring her because "she will be difficult to supervise." Fortunately, she scored well with the two most open-minded committee members, and "ended up getting the job."

Similar resistance and hostility to women in the field of vocational agriculture persisted as she moved to another institution in the 1980s.

> …a group of farmers protested to the board of trustees about my being hired. Now, they didn't say that it was because I was a woman, but it obviously was…. They said that I had not had sufficient agricultural experience and didn't grow up on a farm, neither of which was in the job description.

Alice was politically savvy enough to point out that "people who do not want women and minorities to advance…put up the 'she doesn't have the experience' for whatever because they know they can't get away with saying, 'she's a woman.'"

Even during the 1990s, subtle attitudes and bias toward women leaders and their competencies were still alive and well. She remembers how she was not "universally welcomed" when she first arrived at her previous institution. She could sense that "publicly you are [welcomed] because it's no longer acceptable NOT to be, but then the little things began to occur." With her efforts to correct problems and make changes in the traditional sports areas, she experienced extensive resistance from both inside and outside the campus. On top of ruthless attacks from local media, she was challenged with constant skepticism such as "Is this woman really committed to athletics?" or "What does this woman know about athletics?"

On the one hand, Alice underscored that times have changed for women because "it's much easier now…there are more of us." On the other hand, as well established as she is, she is still "always proving that you can follow the money" because many people believe that women do not know how to handle finance. Moreover, current financial constraints make it harder to lead "because you're making negative decisions [or budget cuts]." Apparently, local media are not ready to embrace women as leaders as well since "they pounded me and the women superintendent…just night and day. When she wasn't being pounded on in the newspaper, I was."

*Coping Strategies*

With respect to strategies used to overcome challenges in the workplace, the first and most obvious pattern of actions emerging from Alice's interview was building strong

coalitions. Over the years, her old-fashioned human relations and team-building skills helped her foster strong support networks on campus, in the local community, and at state as well as national levels. According to Alice, "The women and men I know who are successful…know how to have support networks in communities and friends outside of their work community."

Her story demonstrates how time after time, multiple layers of support she built helped her smooth out uncalled for resistance, skepticism, criticism, and attacks. For instance, in response to the farmers' protest to the board for her employment, once Alice got the job, she immediately called and communicated with all those who were present at the board meeting to seek support and to understand what was expected of her. In the end, Alice's success not only "won them over," but also turned them into her "strongest advocates" when the time came to discuss her promotion at the university.

Another example illustrates how allies in the community can warm up an unfriendly environment for women leaders. Knowing that Alice would need a great deal of support in their male-dominated neighborhood, some women leaders from the local community took the initiative to start a women's group to welcome and support her.

> …the women in Madison knew that this was going to be an unfriendly environment for a woman…because it is so, such a male-dominated sexual structure there. And so they got together and said, "We aren't going to let Alice fail." And I had a little women's group that actually turned out to be a fairly big women's group that I could go to and say, "This is an issue or the newspaper has a story out, and it's incorrect; and I can't be the person correcting it…." And they would take ads out in the paper, or they would…not in any way using my name or anything, but just getting different facts out there…the rule was no one from the university could be in the group because I had to be able to talk freely about what was happening…. We met once a month for just about the whole time I was there. And sometimes it was just food and drink, and sometimes it was serious business…. I had the right to call them together at any time, either a whole group or a small group. They were wonderful.

Similarly, when Alice was forced to confront the greatest resistance and the harshest media attack of her career for firing the football coach, the strategy she employed was to "get

small groups of people together who know more than others and have them help me address

it." She described her combating process as follows:

> …when I was really under attack for firing the football coach, I started a series of community breakfasts; and I had identified the top 100…every community has a top 100 leaders. And I invited them in 10 at a time for a private breakfast with me. And I would just say, "I want to talk to you about what happened with the football coach. Can't write this stuff in the paper…. I want to talk to you about why I'm cutting the budget this way versus another way." I was giving information, and I was asking for them to help me set the records straight because what the attack was was misinformation…[I tried] to get people to understand that while everyone thought he was a great guy, he wasn't…. And THAT really helped a lot.

When faced with difficult decisions, Alice relies on seeking counsel from other senior

women leaders she has met at professional associations, calling her old friends outside of the

community, and reading. The political nature of the university environment makes it almost

impossible to have real friends on campus, especially for women presidents. To escape

temporarily from her job, Alice leaves town with her husband to relax. Part of her success,

she acknowledges, is built on her husband's support and sacrifice. She would not have been

able to focus on her career had her husband not first put aside his career to move with her and

then retired from work to help take care of their aging parents.

Another strategy, "student fix," meaning going out and talking to students, proves to

be very effective in helping Alice refresh her passion for having an impact on lives when

things are not going well. Trying to squeeze some self-indulging things like massages and

facials into her crazy schedule is another way Alice makes herself feel better. Finally, Alice

talked about how "you can get really bogged down in how good or bad the day was."

Consequently, the most important lesson she has learned over the years is:

> Not to let your ego drive your decisions, to seriously evaluate at the end of the day what went well and what didn't, like saying your prayers before you go to bed. Think about the day because it helps put it into perspective. And also just learn to live with the fact that however the day went – it's how it went – you can't change it. It is now

history. You can't rewrite it. If you hurt someone, you might go back and apologize; or if you made a mistake, you might go back and correct it; but you cannot relive that day so just put it aside.

*Views on Women in Leadership*

Alice believes that women bring different strengths to leadership posts through "a softer lens as we look at the world." Women's ability to "get people to come together and talk about their combined interests rather than their positions, but their common interests," their listening and communication skills, their openness, and their inclination toward a more participatory or team-oriented way of leading can often become their strengths and comparative advantages.

The price women must pay to be successful, however, is always great because "there are home stresses that come with being a woman…[and] we make it very hard for women to go up the historical path and still have families" in the academy. She reflects on how hard moving up the ranks is without any help with domestic responsibilities:

> …so there's the stress of who buys the Christmas (presents), who gets the Christmas tree put up, who does the cooking, who'll wash the…. And for those who have kids I think it's really difficult because no matter what anyone says women still are the primary caregivers for children and aging family members.

Furthermore, she is particularly concerned about the low number of women department chairs and the subtle resistance women face on their path toward tenure at the departmental level. After sharing a blatant case of gender discrimination she witnessed and handled, Alice, for the first time, forcefully stated:

> …we still have a lot of bias…about women being as competent as others in our department in particular…you see more [sighs] discouragement if not discrimination in the core of an academic department than you do anywhere else. I mean, you can get away with it there. You can act out there. You're not supposed to be able to, but it's subtle, real subtle…if you REALLY don't believe women should be doing the same work you are, the department gives you a lot of cover.

In answering the question of how, from her perspective, life would be different if she were a man, Alice humorously shared a "very telling" story to illustrate the contrast:

> Frank [Alice's former supervisor]…and his wife Doris and Jack [Alice's husband] and I are really good friends...Frank travels a lot…. We were sitting at their house one night having a drink. Frank said he had to go upstairs because he was leaving on an early flight in the morning. And I said, "Well, it is time for us to leave." And Jack said, "Yes, I guess you've got to get your packing done." And he just laughed, you know. And Frank's wife said, "His clothes were already packed. I've picked them out…and they're in the trunk of the car. All he has to do is walk out the door…[then] she said something to me that was very telling. She said, "My job, my sole job since he started in administration…is to make sure that everyday he walks out of the house with everything, and can close the door and not worry about home until he comes back home, and has everything he needs the way he needs it.

In spite of the fact that this particular couple is a generation older, and that the scenario may not be true for all of her male counterparts, Alice still believes that, "men get a LOT more support."

A powerful yet affable woman, Alice uses her life to live out the spirit of excellence, diversity, equity, and pursuit of the greater good. One of her early leadership surprises is "how resistant people were to new ideas and new people, and people different than themselves." Over the years, "I've always been taken back by the lack of people's ability to be more accepting and more respectful of the contributions that everybody can make," and she constantly has to "invest so much of my leadership energy into creating a more diverse climate," However, she never forsakes her conviction to create a more diverse, equitable, and advanced environment. Her diversified leadership and staff teams as well as her efforts in correcting salary inequity speak for her integrity as an inclusive, effective, and visionary leader that the academy needs.

*Betty: Gaining Legitimacy by Achieving Results*

Betty serves as an "at will" vice president at a large public comprehensive university. She is divorced with a teenage child and comes from a highly educated family. Before entering the university environment, she served as an operating officer in another field for over a decade. The youngest informant of this study, in terms of both age and years of service in higher education administration, Betty professed that her entry into the field seven years ago was actually a coincidence. Fortunately, given her personality, background, and belief in intellectual pursuits, she soon found that "it's actually a very good fit for me."

Although she had to spend significant effort adjusting to the "shared governance" work culture of higher education, her performance as a leader quickly pushed her toward success. She was promoted twice in seven years and was tapped to take over more responsibilities. She now has experience overseeing university budgets, internal audit, strategic planning, human resources, alumni affairs, university development, and public safety/service. Seeing that "things happen…the right way; that things are executed well…gives me enormous satisfaction." In spite of her success in the profession, she humbly stressed how "it has been a learning experience…[and] I am continually looking for new information and new ways."

*Success Factors*

Like Alice, Betty thinks mentoring is an important element in her success story, but finds it interesting that all of her mentors are men. She believes more in the informal mentoring process, though, in that she herself has benefited more from informal learning and observation. Her superb observation skills have allowed her to "take little pearls…from

different people." For instance, by watching one of her male mentors handle a very difficult situation without getting emotional, Betty learned another valuable lesson:

> …you have to go to the higher ground in order to get things done. And you can't let personalities kind of get in the way. And I really learned that from watching that particular person in a particular situation where he had every reason and every right to be really angry, really frustrated, and he just didn't let it get to him. He just kept right on. And he didn't let other people's objections… bother him because he was really focused on getting this particular task that we were seeking to accomplish get done.

To Betty, emotional intelligence, one of her "keys to success," encompasses the ability to "see through all of the muck," maintain a positive attitude and good personal relations, pick one's battle with maturity, and use humor to relieve stress as well as tension. She accounted for how a sense of humor is especially vital in the academic environment:

> …people tend to take things so seriously. So to use humor is actually very strategic because it gets people to release tension; and when they laugh, they are more relaxed and then able to see more clearly. So humor actually can be used very strategically and very effectively.

At the personal level, Betty attributes her success to her "really good ability to get things done." Thanks to the training and "basic skills" she brought from another profession, she has no problem assessing and analyzing the situation, planning and setting the agenda, persuading policy makers, making tough decisions, leading teams, implementing the project, and presenting the results. She knows that she would not be where she is today had she not been successful with some key projects.

Furthermore, she acknowledges the importance of self-awareness, perseverance, strong work ethic, cultivating excellence, and maintaining a great reputation. She stated:

> …you have to know what you have to work on; what your weaknesses are…you have to be open and receptive to new ideas. And I think there is also a certain amount of perseverance. You just have to keep biting that apple…it's the person who does take those extra steps, who does follow through, who gets things done promptly, who has ideas...[who] really understands how to do a job well, who has really high standards stands out.

To Betty, maintaining a solid reputation is actually more imperative than keeping her job in higher education. With her qualifications in another field, she can always get another job; but "my reputation to me is everything."

*Barriers and Challenges*

Adapting to academia's committee structure and shared governance culture has not been easy for Betty. When asked about early leadership surprises, she asserted,

> Higher education, I have come to learn and understand, is an environment that can get very bogged down in process, in committees, in studying. I mean one of the biggest frustrations that I had the first couple of years that I was here was that it took so long to do anything…. This is very hard for me and very much a challenge… And I would say that I probably stepped on some toes initially because I was moving things forward at too fast a pace.

Similarly, while Betty's traditional leadership approach helped her gain "immediate respect and very good rapport with [other male vice presidents]," trouble was created at the same time. For instance, as she tried to establish some structure to ensure her efficiency in running committees, "people would perceive me as being controlling…. I mean people would say that I'm really tough, but I'm…human; and I'm not heartless." When modeling traditional leadership traits like her male counterparts, instead of being perceived as decisive, clear-headed, and non-emotional, she was perceived and criticized as being pushy, demanding, insensitive, and distant.

When Betty first came to the university, she "experienced resistance on a couple of fronts." She observed that both her male and female subordinates seemed to have problems taking and following directions from a female. "What surprises me most," she noted, "are the attitudes and tactics that people use to not do things." The only difference was that while her male direct reports challenged her authority and confronted her openly and directly, her female direct reports would undermine and subvert her indirectly with little things such as

talking behind her back, spreading rumors, or not getting things done on time, "like a little pernicious kind of weed."

She then talked about how a couple of women were particularly resentful and jealous of her because she got the job they wanted. With one of them, Betty went through numerous conflicts for about one and a half years, making her feel very frustrated and sometimes angry. "She would not get things done; she would do something differently than what had been requested, or she just wouldn't do it…. It just was not working," said Betty. Being where she is, she feels lonely at times because "you're subject to an enormous amount of criticism [and] questioning." More than once, Betty stated in frustration, "I don't do well in a mostly female environment."

When she first started supervising people with expertise that she did not have, she struggled with the "diluted subject matter expertise" issue. She confessed that

> I was initially very insecure about not having the subject matter expertise…. When I first came here…I had like five or six areas, and some of them I had always had a supervisory role in those areas, so I felt pretty comfortable with them; but I was supervising people who were financial professionals, and they resented me because I was not an accountant…. I didn't know their language…and I felt quite insecure that they looked down on me because I didn't have that expertise.

Even if she knows that "you never know everything about everything," she has to make conscious efforts to "drop the need to be the expert."

At the personal level, the foremost challenge for Betty has been trying to balance between a young family and her professional responsibilities. Again and again, she stressed the "utter impossibility" of having a sane family life because one must participate in so many mandatory evening and weekend events. "One of the biggest complaints is that I never spend enough time at home, and they [her husband and daughter] used to say I was married to Willington State," she exclaimed helplessly. Unfortunately, the marriage dissolved because

her husband was neither supportive nor could he understand the demanding nature of her work. After the divorce, with her parents living far away, the juggling act became even harder.

Since most of her colleagues and direct reports are either older or they do not have young children, they cannot understand the strains. Unlike them, Betty has many more difficult choices to make. For instance, in order to drive her daughter to school, she has no choice but to skip breakfast meetings and stay late to get her job done; but then she cannot be with her daughter at night. Balancing between a professional life as an executive, a family life, and a personal life has been too difficult to describe.

*Coping Strategies*

Betty approaches the committee issue very skillfully. First, she stresses the importance of knowing the institution, its players, its collegial culture, and what it takes for things to happen. Second, she has her eyes fixed on finding common ground. To accomplish this crucial step, she affirms the value of solid data and input from faculty on the one hand, and she addresses the importance of respecting people's time and achieving results on the other. Her strategies for running committees efficiently are as follows: creating structure for the process; controlling the size of the committee; making the direction and goals clear; setting the agenda, milestones, and due dates; using technology to publish reports; striking a balance between data collection and decision-making; and following through until the mission is accomplished.

Before Betty started working in the academy, she thought the environment would be less political, which soon "turned out to be a big 'ha-ha.'" Hence, she protected herself by keeping personal information to herself and by separating work from friendships.

Meanwhile, she recognizes the need to be open-minded, to hear criticism, and to connect to people.

> I have found that when I do that [connect to my employees], it is extremely positive and that what it does is, with your employees, they feel a connection with you. And people who feel connected to you—they'll come in on a Saturday morning, they'll stay late…because they're connected to you. They're not going to do it because you're forcing them to.

As to resistance from subordinates, she recognizes the fact that she would not be as successful as she is had she not had a very supportive president behind her all these years. Moreover, she has to use different strategies with men and women. Her observation is that men respond to hierarchy much better than women. Her male direct reports, for instance, challenged her authority by disagreeing with her openly and by not following her directions. What they cared about were their ego and responsibility areas but "Once you nip it in the bud – once you cut it off, they respect you; and then they are totally on your side." She took on one of her male direct reports as an example. After fruitlessly trying everything she could to help him improve one area of his work, seeing that he was testing her to determine how far she would go, she told him, "Then I need to find a new director." Ever since then, he has had no problem working with her.

> With women, positional power just did not work as well. Her experience was that

> …you have to take on more of a coaching kind of approach, which is that you're interested in seeing them advance, but you are their ally and partner in their own development and that works far better. It definitely works better.

So she has learned to switch between the directing approach and the coaching approach. Depending on how much time she had, she will either limit dissent and deal with various "delay tactics" by keeping people's feet to the fire, holding them responsible, and having

one-on-one conversations with them, or allow her subordinates to make mistakes with the hope that they can develop good judgment of their own and gradually become self-directive.

Based on a leadership program and her own readings, Betty realized that she did not need to have expertise in all of the areas she supervised. Her role as a leader is to provide direction, strategic planning, supervision, and support for people so that they can reach their full potential.  As to the juggling act between work and life, Betty confessed, "I just don't do a good job of it." Knowing the importance of support systems now, she "would probably be closer to my family just in terms of physical location."

*Views on Women in Leadership*

As Betty pondered over issues for women in leadership, she discerned that although everyone has masculine and feminine characteristics, women in male-dominated environments often have no choice but to show "those traits that are associated with masculinity" more in order to survive and succeed. Consequently, many women fall into the trap of feeling that they must be like men. She herself, for instance, has come to appreciate the strengths that women have in nature, such as listening, connecting to people, sharing information, working with others, and being less ego-driven. Seeing how much women have to offer, she encourages women to bring their feminine traits to the table more often. Believing that "the best leaders are those who understand how to integrate both [masculine and feminine] traits," Betty seems to have found herself a new direction through her reflection.

While women need to take credit for their achievements to increase their visibility, they also need to be humble enough to be a good team player who shares credit when credit

is due. According to Betty, while society encourages men to be ambitious, stand out, and look out for themselves, women have to be careful and "find the balance" because

> …when a woman is all out for herself; is focused on her own ambition; is focused on getting herself noticed, what do we call her?… I mean, there are times when that is appropriate, but I don't see that women who are really pushy and self-aggrandizing do horrifically well.

Over the years, Betty saw how women "struggle in different ways with being good leaders." Most of their challenges originate from the work/life issue, which is "the beginning and the ending of it all, what separates us from being successful like men." Unlike men who usually have devoted spouses to help with family issues and to cheer for their success, "women have to multi-task," especially if they are married with children. Another common issue is "when to put oneself first." When faced with multiple demands, women often choose to sacrifice their own needs by not taking good care of themselves. Many women deans in her institution, for example, compromise their health by balancing improperly between professional and personal life.

As an "outsider," Betty obviously has gained her legitimacy as an effective leader by achieving results since she started her higher education career. Her non-academic background, however, becomes the biggest roadblock on her path to the presidency. Fortunately, she does not care at all. She believes that part of the reason she has the president's full support and trust is "because I don't compete with him." The match has become a good one because she enjoys being the director behind the scenes much more than being the actor who is in the spotlight all the time.

### Carol: Being Grounded Like a Gyroscope

Carol is the president of a large public research university. She is married without children, holds tenure as a faculty member, and is a big sports fan. Her entire career revolves

around her alma mater, the institution to which she has devoted three decades of her professional life. A talented scholar and administrator, Carol was promoted from the faculty ranks to her current chief executive officer position. She has proved her competence in areas ranging from institutional research to budgets and financial management, academic affairs, university development, strategic planning, and fund raising. With her long history of service, she has developed a deep understanding of the institution, its players, and its various functions as well as a strong vision, passion, and love for it.

A first-generation college student with a farm background, Carol never thought she would accomplish so much. Not only is she well respected within her institution, but also she is known as an innovative leader in higher education at the local, state, and national levels. Her own experience reaffirms her belief in education and its role in transforming lives and improving society. The intellectual challenge of leading one of the world's top 100 universities attracted her to her current position. Her focus has always been on what is best for the institution, and she envisions reinvigorating the core values she and her institution stand for and turning her alma mater into an even greater 21$^{st}$ century institution.

*Success Factors*

Carol's success today results from various professional and personal factors. As a professional, her expertise, performance, institutional savvy, and commitment to her alma mater over the years have formed a solid foundation for her legitimacy and credibility as a strong, effective, and visionary leader within the university. Her visibility and reputation at the national level further increase her competitiveness in the marketplace, making her the top choice for her post.

Previously, Carol served as chief academic officer. Her success in that role was a result of her mathematical and analytical abilities, her fairness with all deans, and her efforts to "treat people as individuals with respect." Equally important were help from others, her mental capacity, learning from different leaders, and developing one's own way of doing things. While Carol benefits greatly from personal readings and her work for six male presidents, she accentuated that only through dissecting, analyzing, reordering, and repositioning different success elements can others' strategies be effectively applied to one's own specific situation and personality. Trying to be like others is like cloning, which simply does not work for her.

The root of her success as a leader, Carol noted constantly, is developing and maintaining a balanced internal gyroscope "that keeps you centered on values and grounded as an individual while all the world shifts around you." Being grounded in who she is, a complex value set, and a vision increase her comfort level with the dynamic change processes. She maintains that an effective leader must have the "capacity to analyze what you do as critically as you analyze others," the "capacity to play on and not getting deflected by…the extraneous things that are part of such a big organization of people who are less than perfect," and the ability to make the best decisions for the institution.

Carol then credited her success to "the usual list" of attributes found in most successful people, such as strong work ethic, dedication, decisiveness, sense of humor, risk-taking, perseverance, and positive thinking. A driven, tenacious, focused, and yet dynamic leader, she works 68 to 80 hours a week and believes that

> …the real art of success is doing the things that you don't like to do well and better than almost everybody else. Because you'll naturally spend more time on the things you like to do, and it's easier to do those well.

Never is she afraid to challenge herself. She embraces new opportunities and inspires others to do the same thing. When rough edges, tension, unintended consequences, or even mistakes occur during the process, she simply deals with them with a positive attitude and moves on.

Her optimism enables her to learn and grow despite adversities, to put things in perspective; and to regain power to stay in control instead of being controlled by the environment. Another source of her confidence, competitiveness, and strength is her family. She credits her parents for believing in her and letting her "be different from everybody else if that was what it took," including allowing her to compete in sports and setting aspirations seldom found among girls. The love and friend of her life, her husband, Raymond, is another reason behind her success. He has been her strongest ally, support, and protection throughout their 33 years of marriage.

*Barriers and Challenges*

As the only female vice president in the cabinet early on, Carol went through challenges such as not being listened to, having ideas and credits taken by others, being teased, and being excluded from the old boys' network. Meanwhile, she remembers using different techniques to avoid irrelevant gender expectations and to claim credits to get attention initially. Unlike her male colleagues who were already in the club, she had to take risks to test if she had made it into the club yet. When the evidence showed that after all those efforts, she still was not part of club because her ideas got stolen again, "you just get really ticked off."

As early as a decade ago, Carol became the top pick for the presidency of her institution. However, she was not selected then. Her age, gender, and lack of experience in a

couple of areas could all have contributed to the selection of a man at the final stage of the search process. She admitted that during the search process,

> …there are tons of emotions that go with that. There's anger, you know? There's disappointment. There's sort of a cold realism that comes with what your chances were in the beginning…. It's very hard at the moment to put into perspective the positive part of being there losing because you have all the emotions of losing.

While some barriers disappeared after she became the head of the institution, new issues have surfaced. First, she has to discipline herself to adjust to her new "steward provisionary" role. While some colleagues and subordinates have been able to "see me in a new light," others have difficulty recognizing the change of context. Moreover, she notes that

> …you can always improve on how to better communicate…and that's just something that is always going to be something, that no matter how good you are, you need to be better…. Secondly, there's always a challenge to be better at balancing all of the balls that are in the air at any given time.

The financial downturn troubling the state makes it harder to move the institution ahead as well. Given the dynamic and challenging nature of leading change, criticism and resistance are not surprising at all. Carol's experience is that leading change in good times is much easier because leaders can buy their way through as well as out of mistakes and consequences that are often unexpected or unavoidable. Nevertheless, "when an institution is really strapped for resources, it's harder to buy your way out of those little issues."

In a recent school newspaper report, a board member expressed concern about Carol's not taking time for herself with the hope that she can better balance her professional and personal lives. Nevertheless, not letting her enormously demanding job spill over to personal time and space is easier said than done. Constantly, she has to deal with fatigue, the publicity, and the "heavy stuff" attached to her role as the top leader of her institution. The

tremendous amount of accountability, responsibility, and stress resting on her shoulders is not something that can be shared with anyone, not even her "very few real friends."

As her closest, inseparable comrade, her husband has been very supportive and protective along the way. He inevitably worries about "[people's] talk… [and her] travel, time, getting burned out, all those kinds of things." Other small issues bother Carol and Raymond at times as well, mostly because people do not know how to react to a male spouse who is also working as a professional. Her staff, for instance, does not know how to address her husband. Neither does her husband feel comfortable accompanying her to meetings as the president's spouse, not to mention joining formal gatherings for the wives.

*Coping Strategies*

As the token woman in the higher echelon, Carol initially made sure that she did not get coffee; that she wrote her ideas down to take credit for them; and that she accepted "the way life is" by dealing with the "dynamics of numbers" with a sense of humor. Her experience has been

> …when you're the only one and the guys are in the bathroom, you joke a little about what the hell they talk about so that you couldn't go, you know? Or you say things like, "We have to finish this talk before you can go to the restroom, so let's figure out what this is…." You gradually develop techniques about how to talk with people outside the meetings, how to move into and out of [meetings], follow up with memos so there's a clear record that the ideas were yours and not everybody else's…. After you develop a reputation, then you don't need to do that anymore.

The next crucial stage is transitioning to a "crossover period." After certain power and status were secured, Carol "tested" to see if she had made it to the club yet. First, she dropped some of her initial tactics to see if it were true that she no longer needed them. For instance, she would throw ideas out on the table and then come back to see if the credits

remained hers. She then tried "a new playbook" by pretending she was part of the group

because

> …if you don't try a new playbook, you're always going to be stuck with that marginal
> status…. Sometimes you've got to trust the fact that you really are part of the club
> now. You may not go to the same restroom…but you're still enough a part of the
> club. You don't need to beat people over the head over those things all the time.

Finally, Carol indicated, "there are small intangible things that make up a team." As a team

player, she identifies ideas that are products of collaborative efforts, consciously takes the

opportunity to share credits, and says things like, "You and I are thinking alike." If this stage

can be reached, "then it's sometimes easier to be viewed as part of the group."

Carol's reaction to the 1993 search reflects her progressive attitudes toward obstacles

in life. Wisely, she chose not to let the environment control her. Instead, she swiftly figured

out "what's fixable" and then simply remained focused on what she had to accomplish. With

the right focus, she kept expanding her competencies in areas where she was perceived to be

"not as good at" and did a great job to surprise people. Putting the incident in perspective

over time, she is able to see the positive side of this negative incident as "a lot of

opportunities that have come my way since then would…potentially never have happened."

More prominently, "probably because of the barriers, I became more tenacious and was able

to do something," stated Carol affirmatively.

While Carol successfully redirected herself to master her new role, she had to make

several personnel changes to quicken the transition pace as she relentlessly pushes the

institution forward. When facing resistance, she admitted,

> …sometimes I just go ahead because I think it's the right thing to do. Other times I
> listen and revise a proposal, you know? Put it into a process where it gives people
> more ownership. It depends. You have to always be yourself, capable of exercising a
> full array of options depending on your assessment of what happens. And you have to

be prepared to assess your own ideas in the same way you're prepared to assess and criticize somebody else's.

Using positional power frequently, nonetheless, shows that you are not a good leader. Therefore, Carol embraces listening, adapting, learning, and "a full array of tools and tactics" to "carry people along with ideas, trust, and integrity." She takes every possible opportunity to communicate her vision, encourage new initiatives, foster mutual trust, and lead by example because "Otherwise, every small bump in the road turns into an organizational disaster."

The reason why Carol has been able to handle and balance effectively between multiple demands is that she has developed a solid, internal gyroscope "that takes you through a variety of situations." She points to something on her desk and describes, "it's like a gyroscope that kind of adjusts to different orientations, different facets without losing its grounding." Being grounded in who she is and her values helps her remain focused and productive despite the complexity of the environment in which she works. Carol also warns that with power comes flattery and criticism. Both need to be put in perspective. Especially for criticism and attacks from people who do not want to change or who are not happy with what happened, Carol's credo is "just take it," do not let it deflect you, do not take yourself too seriously, let go, and move on.

When in need of advice, she calls people on her two "lists of helps" that she has developed over the years. She listens to people who will compassionately encourage her as well as to people who will honestly point out her problems. For relaxation, she enjoys taking a walk on campus, going to events, and reading books. To help her staff address her husband, she told them to simply call him Dr. Johnson. For this, she believes that, "If I were the sixth [woman] president, I wouldn't have to worry about that, but the world doesn't work that

way." The positive side, though, is being able to "redefine the role and recognize that it's not personal."

*Views on Women in Leadership*

Unlike their male counterparts, most successful pioneer female leaders either do not have spouses or they have husbands who work. "So one of the issues you have to deal with is the kaleidoscope to date for women," says Carol. Before "a good paradigm for [the] spouse is male" is developed, husbands of women presidents will probably continue to feel awkward while their wives will continue to carry the burden of playing both roles on many occasions.

From Carol's perspective, women's success today is a result of a more advanced society "when the unusual becomes more the usual." Women succeed because people take the trouble to help those with potential "get over the rough spot, whether that's a man or a woman, person of color or not." If all successful leaders work on creating a more welcoming working environment for all, diversity will become less an issue on campus. Unfortunately, "most of us who get really busy in this status don't take the time to do that, and then we're always surprised when we're not making more progress."

For women in higher education to gain equity in pay, they must have enough confidence to negotiate the initial salary and package. Otherwise, "no one is going to take the responsibility in this meritocracy to fix it…unless you get a counter offer or something else." As to the question of how women can have a successful career, a family, and a life, Carol's advice is, "you've got to believe that you can't have everything all at the same time…you have to look at integrating over time and then try to find the right balance at any given moment."

A skillful and expressive speaker, Carol uses various simple yet powerful analogies to describe her worldview and her life experience. To Carol, life is as unpredictable as a golf game. No one can guarantee how the ball will bounce. Similarly, she does not see "life is fair to everyone" written anywhere. Thus, lamenting over what is happening or how life can be unfair may be natural and unavoidable but never gives you power. The only way to win the game, Carol ably asserts, is to focus on where you are heading and constantly to "make the very best next shot." When you do succeed with power and status, she alleges, you then can make the world a better place with more equal playing fields for others.

*Diane: I Earned My Way into the Club*

Diane is a senior vice president at a medium-sized private research university. She is divorced with two adult children and a grandchild. As a first-generation college student, she knew she had to rely on herself and secured a more advanced college degree along the way. So, she took a leave of absence from her job in the corporate business world and returned to school. After she finished graduate school, she taught for a short period of time and then began working as an administrator in higher education.

For the past 30 years, she has served in numerous capacities at three institutions and was promoted from entry-level to executive positions "by having done a job that was extremely well done." She is visible both on campus and at the local, state, and federal levels. A senior executive at her current institution, Diane has loyally devoted more than 27 years of her professional career to her alma mater. The experience she treasures most is working with students, helping them remove roadblocks to getting their degrees, and seeing them enroll their children at the university years later, which is "extremely rewarding."

*Success Factors*

From the time Diane was a graduate student, she worked with minority students and developed knowledge about her alma mater. Although she did not have prior experience in the first job for which she interviewed at her current institution, she worked to gain the knowledge and experience needed and became the only minority staff member in that department of the student affairs division during that time. Over the years, she became an expert in her area of responsibility and worked her way up to a mid-level administrative post.

Meanwhile, she was actively involved "in community relations and interactions with local government, school boards, chambers, and local community activities." Through networking outside the campus, she met several mentors who helped her greatly on her pathway to success. Seeing how talented she was administratively, one of her female mentors recommended her for a higher and better position at another institution so that she would not get stuck in student affairs. Later, two female board members at her current institution strategically helped her move back to her alma mater and advance up the administrative ladder.

In addition to the two female mentors, she credited her advancement to two male mentors. The chair of the board gave her the opportunity to represent the board where she earned the trust "that I could do the job." When it was time for her promotion, a male vice president "who had known me for many years and knew of my work in the community," advocated for her and remains one of her best supporters even today. Diane benefited significantly by working with six male university presidents as well. By observing them and their decision-making processes, she gained invaluable knowledge about various leadership styles and abilities.

Along with networking, she worked hard to establish her credibility in her field of responsibility by doing a great job that "speaks for itself." Her two keys to success are a strong work ethic, which she attributes to her mother, and an advanced education. Ever since she was a child, her mother held high expectations for her and always pushed her to work hard and

> …learn what skills and experiences you must have in order to do a good job…. I don't mind staying for as long as it takes to get the job done and done well, and it doesn't bother me to have to do research to learn whatever it is that I need to know.

"Learn as you go," according to Diane, is particularly essential because practical experience such as in politics and human relations cannot be mastered by taking courses.

Another secret of hers is "surrounding oneself with individuals who have an equally high work ethic and interest in doing a good job… [and] selecting talented people to work with you." She spends time and effort to establish positive and supportive relationships with her directors and staff as a team. Her style as a leader is "to convey the message that we are a team and in this together. I like the people who report to me to know that I am not going to ask them to do anything that I am not willing to do myself."

*Barriers and Challenges*

After becoming a mid-level administrator in student affairs, Diane hit the glass ceiling: "I was convinced that I was not going to advance in my career and that I was pigeonholed in that position. I knew I wanted to advance my career to a more challenging position with greater responsibility in higher education." The knowledge that after more than 110 years, the institution had hired only one female vice president convinced her that it would not be easy to break the glass ceiling again. She saw how Judy, the first female vice president, put a crack in the ceiling with the help of a female board member in the 1970s, and

how Judy struggled with her male colleagues. Diane watched her "cut her teeth here," yet Judy did well and moved on to a large, prestigious research university and "did one heck of a job there."

As the first minority female vice president and the second woman to have ever reached that level at the institution, Diane saw it

> …as a huge responsibility to make sure that I performed the job well, better than expected… so if you are a pioneer, you have to clear the path well so that others who come behind you won't have to deal with…the barriers…about: "Can she do the job? How will she interact with others?" Prior to the last couple of years, my interactions at the cabinet level were with all men. All men. And the biggest barrier there, I think, is not being taken seriously or listened to.

Being the token one, Diane was constantly undermined and had a challenging time dealing with the old boys' network. When she first joined the cabinet, she thought she "could come to the table and interact the same as they [men] did. They sent me back to the drawing board more than once." With her, they wanted data, evidence, and written proposals, unlike what they required of themselves, before they would listen to or discuss her proposal.

The price of being different is substantial in that Diane endured personal attacks and frequent teasing because of her gender. She recalled getting numerous inappropriate comments made at meetings. The situation has improved over the years, and she can now distinguish "mean-spirited" teasing from friendly joshing. Yet she has learned to defend herself in such a manner that one of her male colleagues recently commented that, "Well, she gets teased a lot."

Conflicts between professional and gender expectations create subtle challenges for her as well. As she presents sensitive information in a professional and direct manner, similar to that of most of her male colleagues, her message often is not received as well. She recalls how she was criticized as "cold and unfeeling" when she announced employee releases

"without showing emotion that one might expect of a female." She looked perplexed as she talked about how she was "often described as not warm enough… [when] addressing the board publicly or being too business like." The most difficult situations she has, though, are "not with men but with women." She knows the problem exists partially because she has adapted a more traditional male management style from her numerous male role models and mentors.

In fact, what Diane has achieved as a mother with two young children early in her career is already amazing enough. Her executive role required her to attend numerous dinners, receptions, and weekend events, which made balancing activities between her then-young family and work a "huge challenge." Unfortunately, her job soon "took its toll" on her personal life, which eventually led to a divorce. Diane struggled with family issues and juggling schedules. She concluded, "I think it is a heavier burden on female administrators or executives who have young, dependent children and are vice presidents and presidents at higher education institutions."

*Coping Strategies*

To avoid being pigeonholed in student affairs, Diane utilized networking initially to leave her current institution and then return. In addition to gaining "a different kind of experience," the move added to her career portfolio and enabled her to market her skills and abilities to her alma mater. Because of this "great transition," her current university was able to "look at me from a different perspective [and see] that I am capable of doing a higher level, more responsible job than just being in a [student affairs area] position." Consequently, Diane became the second woman who successfully broke the glass ceiling to become a vice president.

As the token woman sitting on the cabinet, Diane had to earn her way into the club. She soon learned that she had to come more prepared than her male colleagues around the table. To establish her credibility, she has to make her case by providing supporting data and proposals. She successfully helped two female assistant vice presidents change their titles "to associate vice presidents, equal to their male counterparts" by providing "all the evidence." Becoming accustomed to this approach from her male colleagues, she, in return, pressed them to do the same. How did they take it? She laughed and said, "They didn't like it. They did NOT like it. But that's what we require of each other now. Come to the table with a proposal supported by data…. It can no longer be, 'I want to do this.' And when an incomplete proposal is presented, we agree to send it back to the drawing board."

If playing the game by their rules were not enough, Diane uses other tactics. She studies those around the table, their personalities, and how they operate before deciding how to present a case. When gender dynamics come into play, she challenges them by asking if they are "dismissing me or the issue?" If that approach still does not work, she "takes them on one-to-one" to solve the problem. Collaboration is another good way to support each other's initiatives. The last but most essential strategy is establishing good relationships.

Over the years, Diane has used different professional, social, and personal opportunities to build relationships and forge alliances among her male colleagues. She enjoys "playing their games," such as golf, tennis, going to socialize after work, and watching sports. In fact, she could "beat just about all of them [laughs], with the exception of one or two of them. And it helps that I am competitive. And so, I am often invited to play golf." Her friendships with some of the male vice presidents are so positive that "there's not much I wouldn't do to help them… and they defend me when it is needed."

For overt personal attacks, depending on "who's around the table," Diane chooses between several options of response. If the comment is too off-line, she confronts it immediately so that it does not "go unanswered at the table." Another effective way to deal with such a situation is to "let it set on the table and say nothing." She elucidated,

> Usually when there is silence following an inappropriate comment, others around the table quickly understand the inappropriateness of the comment. The individual then feels uncomfortable because of the silence around the table. Simply let the inappropriate comment set out there. You said it. It's out on the table. I'm not going to respond to it at all. I'm going to let your colleagues around the table, usually all males, comprehend what you just said; and you deal with what you just said…. And usually someone feels uncomfortable about the quiet around the table that they say, "Well, I think that we need to move on. We need to be a little more civil to one another."

Even so, "a fairly good amount of thick skin" is needed. She works hard to "just let it go, and not have it eat at you…. Sometimes you have to ignore it and move on."

As to subtle criticisms caused by contradicting professional and gender expectations in the workplace, she feels she has no alternative but to perform decisively as a leader. From her perspective, "being tough is probably my best survival." Usually, she takes a much softer approach when talking with individuals privately and will try to help with their issues or challenges.

The best way to have both a family and a career, she believes, is "planning family time into your daily schedule, taking time to be with spouse…. And you have to be pretty religious about keeping to that because people will find all kinds of reasons to take that time away from you." Her second strategy is combining these two essential aspects of her life. The key is identifying activities that would interest her spouse and children so that they could embrace the campus life like she did. This strategy worked particularly well with her children,

> …[who] grew up with this institution…they became institutionalized with [X] university as much as I was. They went to events. They went to the Childcare Center

for after-school care and summer programs. They attended the camps. They knew this campus like it was their playground. So it worked fine with them.

*Views on Women in Leadership*

Although Diane believes that gender and race have worked well for her because of the affirmative action initiative, nothing could replace being excellent at what one is doing. According to Diane, if you cannot "bring to the table skills and abilities and make a profound case that you can perform at the level, no matter whether you're pink, polka dot, or what," nothing will work anyway. Race and gender

> …might open the door, but you have to prove that you can perform at the highest level in order to stay. You must have staying powers. Staying power is not about race, or ethnicity, or religion, or gender. Staying power is about how well you perform in your job. So, that's where I am on those issues.

To be successful, leaders must be able to make difficult decisions. According to Diane, decisions involving sports, a traditionally male-dominated field, are particularly difficult for women in higher education administration to handle well. She gave an example of how a difficult athletic case cost a female her presidency. She was caught between forces that required her to fire the football coach who violated rules regarding female athletes and pressure from alumni as well as fans to keep a popular coach. The female president resigned. To "Monday morning quarterback" that situation, Diane commented that the female president may have been better off firing the coach, even if alumni and fans called for her resignation.

Diane continued by cautioning women to avoid another common pitfall: "being dumped on by colleagues." She saw how women were

> …saddled with assignments that are gender-related…the overburdening of women for responsibilities…. That happens a lot on college campuses where females are assigned more and more and more work to do. Why? Because we don't know when to say, "No." And colleagues will do that to females. A male colleague may agree to

take on a responsibility and later ask a female colleague for help. Soon thereafter, the female is doing all of the work and gets no credit. Avoid it if you can.

How did she protect her time? Her answer was "there is no nice way to do it. You simply say, 'No, I just can't do it. I cannot do anymore. I'm already strapped with doing this other project, or I don't have any more time to do it.'"

Her guess for the difference being a man would have made in her life was that she "probably wouldn't have to do as much explanation…and probably, in some instances, may not even be questioned." Diane attributed her token experience to the problem of disparity in numbers of men and women occupying top-level decision-making posts. She believes that unless nearly equal numbers of men and women are in leadership positions, gender will continue to challenge those who are minorities in the group, whether they are men or women. Her final advice for women in the field is to improve their negotiation skills, which "can be useful in numerous situations," from protecting oneself and one's areas of responsibilities to budget allocations and collaboration.

If she could change one thing about her career, what would it be? Immediately, Diane responded, "Get that dissertation written." Not having the terminal degree has become the biggest barrier in her pursuit of the college presidency. As competent as she is, getting this final piece of her career puzzle in place is simply a matter of time, which, unfortunately, she does not have under full control as a senior executive. However, she has and will continue to put this goal on the top of her long-term "to do list" so that she will not have regrets as she looks back at her career after she retires.

*Emily: Working Twice as Hard and Being Twice as Good*

Emily is a presidential executive at a medium-sized private university. She is divorced, has two adult children, and holds tenure as a full professor. Before moving into her

current executive role, she served in a number of administrative capacities at three different universities. Coming from a traditional family, Emily was expected simply to become a secretary, get married, and rear children. Had her best friend in high school not challenged her, she would not even have gone to college, not to mention acquiring her doctorate at her mid-twenties and ultimately becoming a senior leader in higher education.

Emily noted that her career path in the academy was not very well planned because the normal progression of her career had been interrupted by several personal crises. Yet, her leadership competence and effectiveness enabled her to move from a mid-level administrative position to a cabinet-level executive role. She enjoys her work and contends that the work-family juggling act, while extremely difficult, was worthwhile. Her greatest satisfaction has been seeing her doctoral students reach their dreams and move to a better life.

*Success Factors*

When asked about the reasons behind her success, Emily's first response was "hard work." She recognizes that she has to "be twice as good and work twice as hard as any man in a similar position," not just because she is a perfectionist, but also because that is the only way for her to be considered an equal and taken seriously. Her mentors, her mother, and many people around her taught her this lesson early on in her career, and

> …it has borne itself out to be a plain fact…whatever I do, I am doing it full force…. I was, literally speaking, working 18 hours a day, 7 days a week…. I worked, and I worked, and I didn't ask anybody to do anything I wouldn't do.

Her second strategy for success is networking. According to Emily, hundreds of people she met and with whom she has become acquainted through different networks have helped her at different stages of her career. She also talked about how a prestigious national network for higher education executives continues to assist her immensely as she moves

along the path to success. She then shared how she has relied on many people "in high and low places" and in different professions to gather information, get things done, or ask for expert advice. She believes that her integrity, honesty, belief in servant leadership, courage to take risks, and positive attitude have helped her succeed as well. She is never afraid to take calculated risks, grasps opportunities when they are available, and always looks at things positively. Confidently and energetically, she stated,

> …one of my strategies…is I'm not afraid to take risks. When others are, I'm not. It's not that I take uneducated risks or uncalculated risks. When there are windows of opportunity, I know if you don't jump through them, they may not ever be there again…there are so many nay-sayers out there who say, "It can't be done. It can't be done. It can't be done." My strategy is, "Yes, it can." Because I believe that there's a way to do everything. It's just a matter of sitting down and strategizing. I don't think that there is anything, if we put our minds to it, that we can't do.

Her last success strategy is negotiation, a critical skill she picked up from her parents. Seeing many women suffer from a salary gap that keeps growing, she stressed the importance for women to know their worth and be confident enough to negotiate for equitable pay and needed resources that will enable them as well as their employees to succeed. Fortunately, she began her career in the profession early enough to build salary equity. As a leader, she relies on a full array of negotiation skills and strategies to secure proper resources to get things done, especially during times of economic downturn. Being good at bartering, exchanging services with other units, persuading other people to advocate for her unit's needs, and finding new ways to get different resources to accomplish seemingly impossible missions have all assisted her in gaining resources to produce a quality product and to gain respect in the academy as a professional "who does not sell herself short."

*Barriers and Challenges*

Even with her Ph. D. in hand, Emily was denied the opportunity to begin work full-time as a faculty member in higher education because she did not have enough experience. After working tirelessly to obtain all sorts of required administrative experience plus successfully moving through the tenure process, she still could not make her "hodge-podge" career fit the "requirements puzzle." Two male supervisors promised to help her advance if she worked for them. Unfortunately, after "working (her)self to death for them," she found that they did not have any intention of keeping their word.

Being one of the token women in the male-dominated cabinet, she is always under the microscope. She can never have a down day, and the pressure to perform is always there.

> If I screw up, it's going to be twice as hard for the next woman who comes in because people will remember what I did and hold it against the next woman who comes in. Or, there may not be a next woman who comes in, but they don't remember that about men. Men screw up all the time because there are more of them, but…nobody remembers or cares; but if the isolated woman makes an error, people remember.

What's more, she found it hard to negotiate her worth in the predominantly male cabinet. Breaking through the "old boys' club" seemed almost impossible to her. Neither could she find her voice nor did she feel that she was being included.

> I feel devalued. I feel invisible. I mean REALLY invisible. I feel like I have no voice because if I try to say something, they speak over me. Not just one, but two or three at the same time…and if I say something, they don't listen. The invisibility piece of it is the worst of all…it's disheartening, just disheartening…because it's like…we're not even there…. So there is a lack of acceptance of women's ability to make decisions at the executive level and a lack of acceptance of women as senior leaders.

Emily is not unfamiliar with resistance and attacks either. As a young, female assistant dean early on, she noticed how every time she tried to say something at the dean's council weekly meeting, men around the table would close their eyes. As an assistant to the president, among other assignments, she was entrusted with position control throughout the

institution during a major budget shortfall. Two male associate vice presidents challenged her authority by complaining directly to the president. Fortunately, the president was wise enough to support her completely so she could do her job. As the first female head of a department, she was perceived as being "a mean, hard-nosed, nasty, young, unbending, and unmanageable… witch [who] was going to destroy the department." Another female financial officer also gave Emily a hard time because she was trying to

> …make a statement to you: "Either you get in line and do what I tell you, or your program will starve. And if you don't believe me, watch me take this money away. You either get loyal, wear the signs, or you won't last around here."

Women seem to be more vulnerable to negative assumptions and nasty gossip as well. She herself was the topic of conversation on many occasions simply because she had to work with an all male staff. She was amazed by the way some people could take a casual lunch between male and female colleague and swiftly turn it into something negative, like an affair, that was "just going to happen." Another disturbing notion was that

> …you can't be a good mother and work. The children are going to be mentally deranged. They'll never be balanced. They'll be slighted somehow. They'll not be well rounded. And that puts all kinds of guilt on you because you certainly don't want your children to suffer. I probably over-compensated for it, trying my best to give my children the best of everything; and I also ended up being a single mother to my children for about 8 years.

Getting through the tenure process as a single mother with two young children was the biggest challenge Emily ever encountered. With her parents living far away, she did not have their support with childcare. In fact, she had to put aside her career for a short time to take care of her aging parents as their only child. When faced with multiple demands from work and family, she often put herself last and, therefore, suffered the most. She felt lonely at times because of her differences from the male senior executives and also because she knew she had to be really careful about sharing confidences and being too trusting. She stressed

that the political environment of higher education makes it "very dangerous" to socialize with people with whom you work because "if they know too much about you, they will use it against you every time!"

*Coping Strategies*

In addition to accepting different leadership responsibilities to gain a broad array of experiences, Emily gained visibility by participating in external organizations and associations.

> I think women need to enhance their visibility by being involved in inside and outside groups in the community and in state and national organizations because the more press you get outside, the greater the opportunity. That's how I got noticed at the University of Asheville…. They will go, "What? Why? Who is that? Why is she getting so much recognition in the community, and why aren't we using her here?" So, if you can't get noticed inside the university, get it outside; and they'll pull you in.

Once in leadership roles, women must continue to spend time gaining acceptance, making connections, being included as a "core" member of the club, and developing trusting relationships among the senior leadership team, particularly if the group is composed mainly of men. Her observation is that females usually have been able to break into the old boys' network by doing what their male counterparts do, e.g., playing golf, going to the bars for drinks after work, or watching football. While Emily never forces herself to do things she does not like to do, she emphasized the need for women to "find out what they [men] do and if anything they do matches what you enjoy, join in."

As to the hardest invisibility piece within the senior leadership team at the cabinet level, except for relying on the president to stop her male colleagues from talking so she could make her points, Emily found the only strategy that worked was "making your case" on various other fronts. In addition to supporting her case with solid comparative data, she

started a task force to foster allies, and together they presented the case at the meeting. Even so, as her male colleagues were ready to throw it off again, she "squawked enough" to finally get some money for her case.

With full support of leadership early on, Emily was able to overcome different challenges from her male colleagues. Seeing how capable she was, her first two male supervisors and mentors gave her projects with great power so that her male colleagues could not afford to ignore her. When her male colleagues sneaked behind her back to try to overrule her authority, the president made it very clear that he had full confidence in her ability and that they would "probably be better off talking directly to her." To deal with fear and resistance from the faculty, Emily showed them that she cared about them by bringing in new resources and remembering personal events in their lives; she also used incentives to pull them on board. Persistent communication, like erosion of stone with water, works for her every time. For open assaults and conflicts, she prefers having a private tete-a-tete with the individual to straighten things out.

As to negative comments or rumors, she believes that the best way to deal with them is to simply ignore them. Wisely, she stated, "you just have to laugh and ignore them." People gossip about others to feel good about themselves, and she sees no reason to let people's ridiculous gossip control her life. With the childcare issue, she paid people to help her take care of her children when they were small. She remembered hiring people

> …to stay with them. People who were educators, who could read to them, play with them. I hired people to drive them to places that they needed to go, like when they had softball, baseball practice, or whatever. And I would meet them there for the games. I hired a taxi to drive…when they were babies…the sitter from her house to my house so that I didn't have to disturb their sleep in the morning.

When talking about friendship, Emily confessed that to protect herself in this extremely political environment, she must be very careful in selecting confidants. Her experience has been "when you move into senior administration, you already have friends; and those are the ones you probably will keep. And you won't make too many more. You won't have time, for one thing, but you also can't take the chance."

*Views on Women in Leadership*

When asked about her insights on women in leadership, Emily commented, "Women have such potential. It's a crime that more women are not being used in leadership positions in higher education." Since she believes that, even today, higher education is a small, closed community, she advised women never to disregard the importance of fostering strong networks as they move along in this predominantly man's world. Moreover, to be successful, women must obtain all of the needed qualifications and credentials, such as the terminal degree, experience in managing big budgets and lots of people, ability to secure grants or raise funds, plus evidence that they are constantly learning and "proving that we have not fallen to sleep mentally."

While affirmative action opened the door and made leadership opportunities more accessible to women, since most gatekeepers are men, marginalization continues to be more of a problem for women than for men. With her own career, for instance, gender helped her get in the door, but also created more obstacles for her effectiveness and retention. Had she been a man, Emily argues that she would not have to deal with the many barriers she mentioned in our interview because

> …there would have been a…woman taking care of the children. [I] wouldn't have had to worry about voice because voice is there. [I] wouldn't have had to worry about resources because they're automatic…it is a male-dominated climate…it would have been totally different. I wish in a way that we could have…a week when men and

women could change genders…so that men and women…have the experience of what it's like being in the other's skin…that way men would get to do all the things [women] do.

Finally, she stressed the importance for those aspiring to be top officials in higher education to develop technical competence in finance and law because these two areas are usually sources for difficulty for women. If they have difficulty gaining sufficient expertise themselves, women should, at least, have a good attorney and make sure that their finance person "is trustworthy, someone who has great integrity, and someone with whom you can communicate easily."

A passionate and outspoken woman, Emily never shies away from women's issues, even if such topics may be unpopular in the male-dominate academic environment because her passion is making a difference for women. To her, ignoring people's needs and talents, even if they are women and minorities, is wrong. As a result, throughout her career spanning three decades in the profession, Emily has been a strong advocate for affirmative action and a more equitable society. Her efforts in helping women to succeed over the years speak best for this zeal of her life.

*Frances: Letting Your Work Speak for Itself*

Frances is an "at will" vice president at a large private research university. She is married with an adult stepchild. Coming from a highly educated family, Frances was expected to embrace higher education as a family tradition. She grew up with and went to the university that her mother and her mother's siblings attended and has remained a faithful, active alumna after graduation. An affable, articulate, outgoing, and energetic woman, Frances can always find a way to connect to people, and she has always been actively

involved in the community, providing leadership for various local nonprofit and civic organizations.

Before being recruited into the academy a decade ago, Frances devoted 20 years of her professional life to public administration. Her outgoing personality, academic training, knowledge about her alma mater, plus her experiences from the political arena all contribute to her success as an expert in government relations, legislative process, public policy analysis, and community outreach. Reflecting on her journey in the academy, Frances describes her success as a "combination of good fortune and hard work." She never thought she would become a cabinet executive of her beloved alma mater. Although her job requires a great deal of hard work, passionately she exclaimed, "[I've had] great fun…[and] it's pretty satisfying at the end of the day that I did everything I could to watch over the university."

*Success Factors*

While both her previous work and her current role require frequent travel, her connections with numerous local, state, and national entities as well as individuals became the greatest asset for her career. Although she did not come up through the traditional academic ranks, acquaintances at her alma mater invited her to work for the institution. Even after she became an executive officer, her institutional savvy and longevity within the system helped her as well as her colleagues make the best possible decisions for the institution.

Another reason behind her success is her boldness. Knowing what she has to offer, she recommended herself directly to two of her former superiors when most of her colleagues were fretting about unpredictable changes with the transition of new presidents at the institution. Given her experience in her previous profession, she convinced her new boss to hire her. When her colleagues at the university were anxiety-ridden about possible turnover

after the new president arrived, Frances regarded the uncertainty as an opportunity. After sharing her insights and advice for institutional improvement in her area with the new president, she won both her current job and the president's trust, which, of course, must be sustained by productivity and continued superior performance.

A self-motivated woman, Frances lets her work speak for itself; and she sets high standards for her staff as well. She works long hours; travels and visits critical stakeholders; stays up late to get things done; attends university, local, and state conventions; and leads by example with her team. Her "ticket to success" is to push for excellence, and she never gives up easily. For instance, to build personal connections effectively, she insists on never letting voice mail "substitute for live human interaction" at her unit.

Frances does not have any mentor, but her observation and analytical skills not only benefit her but also help some of her colleagues navigate through campus politics. Very confidently, she declared,

> I am an intent and intense observer. And I READ people pretty darn well. Again, you know, it's over years of experience in a political environment that I have the skills. It doesn't matter which environment I am in. If we were sitting around the table like this, I am constantly watching, and I'm looking to see how people are reacting. What're the issues that sort of click their consciousness or click their sensitivities?

Besides, she knows she must always have her antenna up, collecting bits of formal and informal information to stay on top of the game. Conversely, knowing how everybody has vulnerability, she protects herself by being a "personally private person."

*Barriers and Challenges*

Like Betty, Frances had to adjust to the shared-governance process in higher education. While parallels exist between her previous and current work, she realizes that work takes much longer to accomplish in the university system. Frances took the committee

structure as an example and described it as "committee'd to death." She spoke of how academics can spend a year studying an issue, offer some recommendations that may remain dormant for another half year, and then may or may not have any actions taken on them. She is particularly concerned about "issues that have components related to the external environment." For instance, she worries about the accountability issue for promises that university officials give to external entities, but then nothing happens year after year. Frances could not help saying, "We should have been able to do better than that [slow pace]."

Among her colleagues, she sometimes sees problems with personality conflicts, juggling for positions, and outright competition. She also gets skepticism from academics who do not understand the importance of her work. However, she sees the confusion as an individual's limited vision instead of an institutional barrier. Occasionally, she has to deal with people who refuse to do things differently, which can be "infuriating." Finally, she has come to learn to accept the fact that in a huge, dynamic system like a university, one cannot have complete control over everything all the time. Things sometimes just do not happen the way you expect or want, and you end up reacting to unexpected situations more than directing everything.

Although Frances struggled as the only woman in setting after setting in her previous profession, she has never had to worry about being singled out or intimidated since she began her higher education career. Why not? "[Because] the ground had been softened by the time I entered into the administrative ranks of the university." When she became a cabinet member, the team was already balanced in terms of gender. What difference does number make? Confidently, Frances testified that critical mass makes "a whole lot of difference" for women

because you may ignore one or two women pretty easily, but you "can't really ignore six people."

To Frances, most of the challenges come from her work with critical external stakeholders, not from within. She admitted that dealing with some of the legislators with really difficult personalities has not been easy because they may act out and be quite confrontational as well as adversarial. As a lobbyist for the university, sometimes she has to do her work "in settings that are NOT all that comfortable" as well. She must instantly and appropriately respond to different scenarios and interact with groups or individuals who may have totally opposite views and positions. Economic constraints at both the state and federal levels also increase the difficulty of her work.

While the lack of the terminal degree never stops her from doing a great job in her current position, subtle skepticism occasionally emerges because she does not have the appropriate "title." She also anticipates that if she attempts to pursue the next level of position and responsibility in the academy, not having a doctorate will become a significant obstacle. Another personal regret is not having children of her own. Although sacrificing motherhood for her career was never part of her plan, the passage of time leaves her with no choice but to "forgo that aspect of (her) life."

Like other women leaders who have to balance between work and family, Frances confessed that her "several nights a week being out or gone" increased the difficulty of maintaining "family stability and relationships." Both her husband and she are professionals in higher education administration with very demanding schedules. On top of this, with different commitments and separate activities, finding time to spend together as a couple is even harder. Finally, she recognizes the fact that "there's progress obviously, but there's still

an overwhelming responsibility that falls to women that men don't necessarily have to deal with."

*Coping Strategies*

To keep up with the instant pace at the state capital, Frances knows she must have complete authorization and access to the president. Fortunately, none of the presidents or interim presidents has ever had any problem with letting her do her job independently. The first president believed in her so much that he "gave me ABSOLUTE latitude and freedom." Similarly, after she explained to the second president why she expected to work independently without having to seek his approval constantly, he agreed to completely rely on her expertise. As to the issue of liability with community services, her suggestion is "Don't make those promises if we don't have any intention of getting there."

Since no one guarantees the chemistry between cabinet members, she works on creating trusting relationships with her colleagues by covering each other's back, putting aside personal preferences, and putting institutional welfare above everything. When seeing unacceptable juggling behaviors, Frances reminds people they are there to "contribute to the organization," not to position for their next jobs. For personality conflicts, her advice is: "just do your job." As one of the most senior cabinet members, she serves both as a confidant of several of her colleagues and "an invisible player to help guide certain things." Seeing how a personal issue can weigh people down and often "clouds their ability to…[accomplish] successful work," Frances says the best solution is to "carry no long-term grudge and animosity."

To get their work done, she and her team must maintain good relationships on campus as well because "you can't just sort of assume that you can call the shots." She uses

perseverance to push for risk-taking behaviors among her staff. She supports them in every possible way, provides a safe environment for mistakes while urging them to think "outside of the box." Her model of getting things done is:

> If it's not illegal, immoral, or unethical, then what is the problem? Why can't we get this done? So by saying it that way, and believing it, I'm going to push, push, push. Lots of people say, "No one is going to do it that way." "Oh, really? Why don't you do it that way?" "Well, because, you know, there's that and the other thing and that the only…." I said, "That's unacceptable. I am getting it through a different way. This is another way we can approach the problem. Let's get this done."

With critical external stakeholders for the university, Frances' strategies for building effective relationships are as follows: 1) using a one-on-one approach to connect to them and their staff members, 2) finding out where they are and visiting them "on their turf," 3) listening to and dealing with their issues or needs, and 4) making THEM feel comfortable before fitting in the university's agenda and issues. Since legislators usually have "got enough baggage that they can pick up and carry on without me," her opportunity arrives when they need something from the university. Usually, by then, she can more effectively convey the university's agenda to them to forge alliances.

If she could live her life again, Frances said she would probably get another degree. She would also pace herself more carefully so she would not miss her chance to have babies, even if having children might have a negative effect on her career. Particularly, she put emphasis on watching for the passage of time because "you cannot get back the years that you are going to rear children. If you don't control it, you abandon any opportunity to manage once you're successful."

Having a spouse who also works in higher education administration has its advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, Frances enjoys great professional support from her husband. She can see how their relationship has been enriched and strengthened

through the process of sharing ideas and experiences in the field. On the other hand, making time for her dual career family becomes extra challenging. She has to make personal commitment to take time, set priorities and say "no" when needed, be really good at time management and multi-tasking, and activate informal support networks to seek help. Every weekend, she must be very productive by purposefully planning her route to get domestic things done so that she can hit the road running on Monday morning. Otherwise, she simply does not know how she can make the balancing act work.

*Views on Women in Leadership*

As a beneficiary of previous advocacy and work on equal opportunity for women, Frances testified how gender can be an advantage for women in institutions that "are intent on living the commitment to diversity and living the commitment to a welcoming environment." Nevertheless, she never believes that women can achieve executive positions simply because they are women. In fact, nobody can sit at the table as an executive without doing the work and showing their expertise to prove that they need to be there.

According to her observation,

> …women who are in leadership [have] fairly strong personalities. They are NOT shrinking violets. They don't get to where they are because they've been quiet [speaks softly]. They actually have something to offer and…what they've had to offer is a lot more than what others might find as disquieting or difficult…. They are STRONG people. On the other hand, in their strengths [they] also neglect an advantage that sometimes we don't like to display. And that is that we are women. So, it is not incompatible to be strong and be a strong woman if taking somewhat advantage of the fact that you are a woman.

Therefore, she encourages women to be themselves and make good use of some of their strengths such as listening, nurturing, and understanding. Other patterns that she recognizes over the years include the low number of female chief financial officers; the low number of women in medicine and sciences, which are usually the pipelines for vice

presidents for research in big research universities; and the high percentage of women in student affairs and university relations, which, unfortunately, seldom lead to the college presidency.

Finally, Frances reminded aspiring leaders that disappointments are always possible, but "I don't think you can leave individual disappointment as a framework for success." She believes more in perseverance, emotional intelligence, and continual pursuit of excellence because

> …one mark does not make or break a career. I think you have to recognize that there ARE going to be disappointments along the way; that you account for them and move on; that they don't bog you down; that you don't sit and fester about them. Men RARELY would sit down and worry to DEATH about what it is they just did. They just don't do it. Women tend to [worry and whine]…you [should] just move on…account for it [and] recognize it…but if you let it absorb and consume you, you will be immobilized. You will be paralyzed from moving forward…you just have to account for the fact that there will be disappointment. Don't let it bog you down.

An expert in politics, Frances explained that since politics is about power, cliques within groups usually form and fall "toward where people perceive the power is." Thus, people may gravitate toward those whom they perceive as "having the upper hand" for different purposes. While executive officers inevitably need to be sensitive about different board members' preferences, positions, expectations, and ways of doing things, she warned against focusing on pleasing certain people rather than on doing a great job. To her, nothing speaks louder than your work and productivity. If you are good at what you are hired to do, she asserted, then "It isn't necessary to do this other nonsense."

### Grace: Earning Trust with Openness, Integrity, and Respect for Others

Grace is a vice president at a medium-sized public comprehensive institution. She is married with two adult children and holds tenure as a faculty member. As the only child as well as the first college student in her family, she was expected to "become a secretary,

marry the boss, and live happily ever after." Fortunately, she was "stubborn" and "rebellious" enough to challenge her father's expectation because she did not want to be confined at home like her mother. Her independent and audacious spirit then led her to a different country all by herself to pursue graduate study.

Since graduation, she has actively served her alma mater for more than three decades as a faculty member, then as a mid-level administrator, and now as the chief academic officer in the cabinet. A veteran faculty member, her "biggest satisfaction…comes from faculty work." Her greatest frustration, though, is not being able to get more things done because of the administration's lack of actions. Such frustration, however, motivated her to assume the responsibility to improve and stabilize the system. Over the years, her competence, openness, integrity, and respect for others have won her the trust and high esteem from her supervisor, colleagues, and subordinates.

*Success Factors*

Throughout all of her life Grace has immersed herself in male-dominated fields, from her education and her career, to her hobbies. She was the only woman in the whole cohort of her academic program; she works as a professor in a predominantly male academic program; she occupies a senior executive post that few women have been able to achieve; and she enjoys doing things that most men do not do. In many ways, skepticism and discriminatory views toward women have become part of her life. Fortunately, none of these stereotypical views can be verified with her. Given her competitive nature, "the fact that women did not go into [a men's field] may have enticed me to do it." Obviously, Grace has used her life to prove that a woman like her can, indeed, be successful doing anything she wants.

When asked about what led to her progression to her current position, Grace credited her "consistent track record that demonstrates over time that you are competent…that you have enough self-control; that you can handle some stress." Her active service as a faculty member and long history with the institution are also contributing factors. Wittily, she said besides chairing a department for three years, she "chaired just about every faculty committee known to mankind." When the institution was challenged with instability and needed someone who knew the system well enough to weather the storm, Grace naturally became the then-chancellor's top pick.

Even so, Grace spoke of how "there's no way under that sun" that she would have accepted the vice presidency had her children "still been at home or had been small…. So it was the coincidence that our children had just left [and] I had more time." How much time does it take to do a great job as a chief academic officer? "Probably about 16 hours a day, six and a half days a week," answered Grace. Since she values the importance of interpersonal relationships greatly, she regards such interaction, unlike some other leadership tasks, as something that cannot be delegated. Ever since she assumed the post, no matter how busy she is, she never stops spending an enormous amount of time communicating and making herself accessible to build trust and respect with various constituents.

What have been her strategies for building trusting relationships? Grace commented,

Well, you have to earn it. I don't think you'll ever have it up front. You earn it the hard way. So you do lots and lots of things, and…this goes for both the faculty and the chancellor to whom you [report], and the other vice chancellors. It's your work that has to speak for it. You know, if you do that with integrity and the best of your ability…if that's what they think is what needs to be done…and there is never a deviation that builds trust.

She also makes sure that once decisions are made, she supports them wholeheartedly. With faculty, she wins their full support and respect by spending time writing newsletters to keep

them informed, using an open-door policy to listen seriously to them and resolve disagreements, speaking for and caring for them, remaining fair and neutral among cliques, and always respecting them as people, no matter how different their personalities, positions, or interests may be.

Although Grace does not have any formal mentoring experience, she talked about how observing other leaders and reading have helped her over the years. By observing other people's failures and successes, Grace suggested that you collect "two sets of data…[and] adopt the things that you like and that you think will work for you, and you avoid the ones that you think are just absolutely awful." Through reading biographies of successful individuals, she stores knowledge about how others have overcome adversities in their life so that she can refer to them when similar things happen to her.

*Barriers and Challenges*

Reflecting on her experience of pursuing a college education in a male-dominated profession, she cited vividly and humorously two incidents to illustrate how gender discrimination and stereotypes have been part of her life since school days. To discourage Grace, the only female in a huge lecture, the instructor would "walk to the front, look at me of all the class, and say, 'Good morning, gentlemen.'" When Grace took a series of oral examinations trying to get into the graduate program, "before they [male professors] ever settled down to talk about the subject…[they] would start by saying, 'Why would a nice girl like you be in [a traditional men's field]?'" She admitted, "I've never felt as a member of a group. I've always felt that I've been a 'minority of one' all my life."

When Grace agreed to serve in her current executive position to stabilize the institution, she thought, "I know this institution, how it works better than anybody else. Not

well enough, it turns out." She had to get used to having a boss, making sure that the legislators remain happy, learning the different administrative processes and constraints, being cautious with what she says to avoid unexpected consequences, and fulfilling many "unspoken expectations that go with the job." Over the years, she has been quite successful handling all of these challenges except for one thing: laying off staff.

> I have a very hard time doing something when I know it has a negative effect on good people who are working hard. For example, we had to lay off a number of staff members for the budget cut. Fortunately, we didn't have to lay off faculty. We just kept positions unfilled. But those lay offs were very hard…. There are times when there are conflicts between what's good for the institution and what's good for people. And really the responsible choice of my view is to do what's good for the institution in those cases. It's not easy.

Regarding the issue of pay equity in the profession, on the one hand, Grace argued with the credibility of the statistics that showed women are underpaid, reminding people "to be vigilant…[with] games being played with statistics." On the other hand, she exclaimed without hesitation,

> I believe that I've always been underpaid for my whole life, actually…. I was hired at a very low salary because people thought they could get away with it. Those were different times, and then once you're at a certain salary, percentage increases on percentages, so in a way you never catch up.

Otherwise, Grace reported no institutional barriers since the institution serves a very needy community and has been very hospitable to women and minorities. Its cabinet has been gender-balanced for years. Currently, the male and female ratio in the cabinet is two men to three women. Not only so,

> I'd like to say it was 5 or 6 years ago, when our entire administration was female. We had a female interim chancellor, had a female provost—me. We had a female vice chancellor for administration. We had a female vice chancellor for student services, and we had a female vice chancellor for institutional advancement. That's all there is, okay? So everybody was female…. It was totally accepted, and nobody even thought a reason to question about it.

If any barriers exist for her career development, they would be personal and family-related. Grace has always identified herself as a faculty member more than as an administrator. Being a chancellor, first of all, does not attract her because "a chancellor is too far removed from the faculty. I am about as removed as I want to be." Secondly, a family issue came up because

> I've considered myself place bound. In other words, moving or going to another institution…I have never considered an option, okay? The barriers that exist for me are the ones that I put up. For example, I have been solicited by search firms to apply for presidencies. I said, "No, I cannot…I will not move. I will not leave this area." So I am the one who said no. My husband and I are both working in town. There's no way we can both relocate or want to.

*Coping Strategies*

To cope with resistance, skepticism, and discriminatory behaviors she encountered in various male fields, Grace first learned to live with it and "let it fall off her back." She knows she only has these two choices: "either you quit, or you just deal with it." As the lone woman, her strategy for survival and success has always been constantly proving herself by doing her job "really, really, really well." The fact that she has to "be better than anybody else" to overcome gender-related barriers seldom bothers her. Actually, she enjoys the pleasure and satisfaction of being the best.

As to awkward remarks, Grace simply said,

> …ignore them…[and] don't take those things personally. I mean, if anybody makes an awkward remark, they are saying something about themselves, not about me, okay? So, my reaction is—if you want to make a fool of yourself, go right ahead. You just did it.

She then used a metaphor to describe her way of dealing with negative attitudes, both as a teacher and as a leader:

> …you can become very discouraged in teaching when you focus on the one or two students who don't even pay attention and who screw up and who fail the course. You

have to focus on the ones you reach and to whom you make a difference. Same thing
here. If you focus on the few people who insist on throwing sand in the gears, you'll
get discouraged. But you focus on the ones who appreciate what you're doing, who
recognize the progress; [then] you're fine.

With unwritten expectations such as maintaining good relations with critical

stakeholders, Graces accepts them with a progressive attitude because her credo is as follows:

You either accept the post and do whatever is necessary to do your job well, or you resign.

Therefore, she makes decisions about whether to attend different events "not based on what I

like to do or not, but what the institutional consequences are. What is the level of importance

for the University of [X] that I be there." Her duty is to find out where informal decisions are

made and to make sure that she is present on those occasions, wherever and whenever that is.

Her strategy is to "find out what people's habits are, and you just HAPPEN to be at one of

those places at that time."

Grace uses similar strategies to stay on top of informal university discussions. To

determine what is going on with various constituents, she plugs into networks to "find out

what the latest scuttle butt is." For subcultures in which she prefers not to get involved, "I

made darn sure that I'm on very good terms with somebody in that group to find out what's

going on." She then creates opportunities for informal meetings or casual conversations with

her friends by having coffee with them or by bumping into them at other places.

Unlike the time when she enjoyed academic freedom as a tenured faculty member,

Grace soon realized that, as a senior executive, she must be very careful with what she says

to avoid unexpected consequences. Fortunately, the lesson was learned early on. She

remembered:

> …when somebody who probably is my friend in a very real sense repeated back to
> me something I had said two years earlier in a very CASUAL, off-the-cuff remark
> about how I had said such and such then and therefore that's what had been done.

That's when I realized that no matter what you say, there might be somebody who takes it seriously and who will remind you of this five years later…. But the message was clearly: Anything I say is on the record, and will be held against me.

To deal with the constant struggle in finance, the university has initiated a series of fund raising activities. When Grace has the money, she can support worthwhile projects with monetary assistance. "When you don't have money, the alternative is for me to go there. Be at one of the events or something as a symbol that this function is important for the university, and that's what I do a lot. So that's another way of extending recognition." Knowing how her relationships with and cares for people at the institution have increased the difficulty of making "agonizing decisions," Grace decided that the time has come for her to leave her post. She believes that someone from outside will find it easier just to "look at the bottom line, look at the numbers, and not see the people and what it does to them."

Other than geographical immobility, Grace knows she is very lucky that everything worked out for her so she gets to "have it all." Gratefully, she stated,

I have a very patient and supportive husband. Without him, I probably wouldn't have been even a faculty member, and that's a make or break…we each made a commitment to career, but he still supported that choice [of letting me be a career woman], and then he's lived with the consequences without complaining.… He is my best friend and strongest support.

Knowing the difficulty of going through the tenure processes with young children, they made a deliberate decision not to have children until they both were tenured, without even thinking about possible future fertility problems. When their children were born, Grace took four years off to take care of them at home. Then all that remained was simply the matter of "ferrying and transporting and fetching and lining up babysitters."

*Views on Women in Leadership*

According to Grace, "We have some wonderfully competent women in the profession that we can all be proud of." Gender has never been a notable factor at the cabinet level because her institution started embracing women's talents long ago. Moreover, she foresees that

> …as more women are in higher education, men will have to change…because I think overall most women, at least women that I see here, are very caring. And you know, they think about the consequences of their actions. So I think the effect will be that men will have to become more thoughtful, which is good, you know?

Besides, Grace kept emphasizing how treating others with respect has been imperative to her because:

> you need to be able to look at yourself in the mirror. And so there are certain things that you need to do just to live with yourself. That's probably different for everybody. And I think being nice or well or treating other people with courtesy and all of that is one of the requirements that for me just goes with being a human being, nothing to do with what your position or your work is.

As a leader, "you don't survive if you are just nice" because no leader can please everybody. Her responsibility is to "do what's right" and make sure that her decisions are based on sound reasons so when people challenge her, she can prove that nothing is done arbitrarily or simply as a favor to anyone. Years of experience in male-dominated fields also taught Grace another lesson: respond to possible suspicion from her male colleagues' wives openly instead of waiting for questions to come up. Therefore,

> I made a point of wearing a very large wedding ring, and I made a point of talking about my husband because what still is out there is wives being jealous if they know that their husbands are working with a woman.

Finally, she encouraged aspiring leaders to grasp all relevant professional development opportunities to prepare themselves. For instance, her institution offers in-house workshops on human relations, which she believes is a critical aspect of leadership. For those

who desire to have a career in higher education, a stable marriage, and children of their own, her advice is to "sequence things" according to a timeframe and develop a plan. Citing a wise comment she heard, Grace affirmed confidently, "You can have it all, but not at the same time."

The question of how life would be different had she been a man seemed to trigger her imagination and interest. Cheerfully and spiritedly, Grace responded,

> I'd love to be a man. You know, have a wife who cleans house and other stuff [laughs]. I think overall…life is easier as a man. Just one example: my husband and I have always had a pretty good sharing of housework, okay? But then when we had kids, and you had a sick kid, and that kid wants his mother, were you going to say, "Sorry, it is your father's share?" Didn't work like that. So I think no matter what, women get more of the chores and the work at home than the men do.

A scholar administrator, Grace has dedicated her whole professional life to her institution. She accepted the challenge to serve her institution because she thought no one knew the school and its constituents better than she did. Ironically, years later, the same reason—her deep caring for people with whom she has worked for such a long time, makes it particularly difficult for her to cut positions effectively and thus brings about her decision to leave her post. Yet, she has fought all the good fights for her institution, her colleagues, and herself so no regrets remain for her.

*Hope: You're Never Done Learning, Thinking, and Communicating*

Hope serves in the capacity of vice president at a medium-sized private research university. She is the middle child in her family, remains single, and holds tenure as a faculty member in a predominantly male college. Since her teenage years, Hope has been encouraged by her grandmother and her parents to get as much education as she can to get ahead and to take up leadership roles like some of the most powerful women in the world. Constantly, they told her she could do anything she wanted. With their adamant faith in her,

Hope has developed strong confidence that she believes can be replaced by nothing on her path to success.

For more than 25 years, she has devoted herself to working most of the time as both an administrator and a faculty member at six universities, advancing from instructor to full professor and from mid-level to top-level administrator. She has many publications as a full professor and has accumulated managerial experiences in institutional data processing, budgets and grants administration, research and planning, re-accreditation, strategic planning, student information and course evaluation systems, service quality and marketing, and academic planning and assessment. Contentedly, Hope described her journey in the profession as

> Interesting, challenging, rewarding. You get to affect people and improve the education of students. I think it's very, very humbling to have such responsibility; and I think you really need to reflect on how very fortunate you are to have had the opportunity to do this. I think it's a great honor to have these kinds of jobs.

*Success Factors*

The two main factors that enhanced Hope's advancement are her knowledge about the institution and her reputation for being extraordinarily productive. A veteran faculty member and administrator, Hope knows how the system works and has fostered strong webs of connections with important constituents on campus. Her passion for her work, the quality of her work, plus her multiple, consistent, outstanding achievements as both a faculty member and an administrator made her the top pick for her current position.

The new president invited her to join the senior leadership team acting as the provost with the hope that she can stabilize the institution and improve the effectiveness as well as efficiency of the university system. Hope is proving that the president made a right decision because "I think people are glad, surprised, pleased that I'm stabilizing the organization,

putting procedures and processes in place that they can count on." Because of her performance, her appointment has been extended. Another reason for her success as a leader is: "I'm pretty transparent, so people always know what I'm doing; and there's very little unknown about my ideas and what we're trying to accomplish."

She credited her strong confidence, her mental capacity, and her commitment to service for her willingness to accept extra responsibilities as well as multiple academic and administrative roles. Whenever people tapped her for help, her sense of obligation as a member of the community always made her say "yes." By constantly expanding her realm of capacity and experience, she got more exposure as well as more contacts all over the campus. By confidence she means the ability to face honestly and accept both one's strengths and limitations because "You have to understand your limits to be confident about your strengths."

The many role models in her life have made a great impact on her as well. Hope saw on television "a lot of powerful women in my background that were part of the news every night in our family." Examples set by famous international and national women leaders such as Margaret Thatcher, Golda Meir, and Margaret Chase-Smith, the first female senator in the U.S., in her teenage years all helped inspire her to do great things. Her grandmother, her first and best mentor, discussed with her ways for girls to get ahead and set no limits for her. Hope sounded grateful as she mentioned a former female supervisor who "helped me understand my strengths were analytical, and counseled me what I should think about developing and why," and a female full professor who guided her as she tried to establish herself in the academy.

*Barriers and Challenges*

The biggest challenge for Hope as a leader is effective communication. Whether for change leadership or for dealing with economic difficulties,

> …you always have communication problems. You make assumptions that people know what you're talking about. They may or may not…[and] all of that gets in the way…. You don't have enough time to talk to everybody…. You end up using various media vehicles that never communicate your passion.

She noted that the challenge behind problems with communication is time because "You don't have time to communicate as effectively as you should…and you can't ever spend enough time communicating. That's the big lesson."

When she first assumed her current position, she was "surprised by how much you do not know…[and] how absolutely swamped I am every day. EVERY SINGLE DAY. It doesn't let up. The stress, the meetings, and the demands on your time are just beyond imagination." She also found that "everything takes longer than you think, and all the problems are more complicated than you knew when you started." Consequently, she found herself "always working, taking stuff home." She admitted, "there's that critical tension…between trying to do the right thing and thinking about it enough versus wasting time on other things. That has really challenged me."

Beside difficulties with effective communication and insufficient time, when she first assumed her current position, she could sense that some people were intimidated or worried about her high standards. Fortunately, that has not been a real issue for her. Given the amount of work, demands of her time, and the pressure to perform, she admitted that she did not have time to engage in small talks and would get impatient with people who waste time. Finally, she mentioned occasional disagreements with colleagues because of misunderstandings, different values and views, or different positions or roles they have to represent.

When asked why she thinks she has not experienced gender-related barriers or discrimination in her career, Hope provided several reasons. First, she admitted,

> I could just be blind on this issue…and I've just sort of built this nice invisible wall and decided to ignore it 30 years ago, and I'm still ignoring it…you see you have to decide if you're going to let other people run your life, or you're going to run your life. And at some point I decided that I was going to be a productive person, and that was what I decided.

Except for using her performance to prove that she is as good as any men to avoid discriminative treatment, she determined long ago that "I was going to be paid the same as guys." Every time she got a job offer, she would ask how much her male counterparts were making and would not take the position unless she received an equivalent salary. For the only one occasion when she was not getting the same money as the men, she says, "When I found it out, I went to my supervisor, and the situation was corrected. I just corrected it, you know?" Very rarely she felt that she was treated differently at the workplace. Even if she was, she regarded the problem as one of people's bad manners instead of "a function of gender…[because] you get the same kind of rudeness from men as you do from other women."

Most important, several pioneer women leaders had already cleared the path at her current institution. Hope recalled that the institution started to have women in top-level decision-making positions "in the middle-to-the-late 1980s," with the first female vice president for academic affairs serving since the early 1990s. Currently, the institution has a female president, and its senior leadership team is better than gender-balanced. As a result, people have been more concerned with teamwork and collaboration than gender.

Since Hope never got married and does not have any children, the only family challenge she reported was the adjustment to her parents' deaths. The decision to remain

single, however, was neither easy nor deliberate. Had it not been that both of her fiancés died unexpectedly and unfortunately, Hope would have had a very different life and work experience. Nevertheless, even without the burden of domestic responsibilities, the long working hours, multiple demands, and stress from the job have made health a natural concern. She believes that women with similar levels of responsibilities and workloads are all faced with the issue of health and stress.

*Coping Strategies*

To make sure that she gets her point across, "You just have to keep working on it. You have to keep working on communication," stated Hope. Her strategy is to express "the same message, the same issues. You have to say the same thing about three, four, five times so that people finally say, 'Oh, yeah. This is what we are doing.' Lots of repetitions with various types of communication."

Once she entered her current leadership role, she realized that "There's more to learn than you thought…. You learn every single day." Therefore, she found that she is "never done learning, reading, thinking, reflecting…trying to figure out how to do things better." To catch up with things that she does not know, she will "call up people, find an expert, read a book, get an article, do an Internet search, talk to my colleagues, ask questions…. Just try to learn." To save time, she has become "less tolerant of people who waste time [because] they are just causing you not to get something done that you have to do." Last, to pace herself more realistically when handling complicated issues, she learned to "double your time for everything you think you're going to have to do."

A confident and persistent leader, Hope does not worry about resistance to her authority or skepticism about her experiences. From her perspective,

There might be resistance, but you still are going to be able to move. You end up not having challenges that are defeating. You always have challenges. They might stop you for one position, but not for the next. You don't think any of it is permanent, as long as you have an attitude about moving ahead…as long as I can contribute to the discussion and hopefully provide sort of the coordinative leadership for all these bright, talented people who work together… I don't think people are so worried about what you haven't done. They're much more concerned about what you CAN DO. So by worrying about what you haven't done, it's the wrong side of the equation. If you can do the job, nobody worries.

Besides competence and performance, another indispensable factor behind her

success and effectiveness as a leader is support from key stakeholders. Hope explained,

You can't do this work without having some very, very key supporters. You have to have some key supporters…[meaning] people in leadership roles and the faculty…[who] at least understand what you're trying to do and appreciate your viewpoint. They may not always agree with you; but if you have their respect, life is easier. If you lose it, you're probably dead in the water.

When she has to deal with conflicts or disagreements with her colleagues, her strategy

is to "go talk to them, work with them, listen, refine what you're trying to do, ask for their

advice, make some changes to incorporate what they're telling you" to get the job done.

According to Hope, listening and thinking are vital because

…sometimes the case you state is wrong. You haven't thought it out enough, you have to go back and say, "Well, maybe I should adjust this," rather than being committed to where you started. You can bring an issue forward and end up changing–moving 180 degrees or something and say, "You know, this really is better doing it this way. Thank you for talking about that." And you go back a week later; and you think about it some more, and you change it. I think you have to be fluid. I think you have to be flexible. You can't be certain that you are correct all the time. Often you're not. [So it's] a process of, I think, creative improvement, creative dialogue to find a way–a means that is more acceptable to your colleagues.

When feeling burdened and stressed, she tries to remain refreshed and effective by

saving at least one hour every day to enjoy herself with various activities such as taking a

walk, playing with her dogs, going out with her horses, talking with "a few good friends," or

other interests "not related to the office" to get away from work for a while. Knowing how

important this private time is for her personal effectiveness, she hangs on to it no matter how busy she is. Her religion, prayers, meditation, and values have also played important roles as she tries to sustain and drive herself.

*Views on Women in Leadership*

Since she has worked full-time for more than 40 years, she has witnessed several generational changes for women, and she believes that, for many women, things have gotten better since the 60s because

> It's easier for women to get reviews…. They're getting more genuine reviews for positions than they did earlier. I think you had to be really exceptional earlier, but now it's becoming more routine and ordinary to have women in positions of leadership and authority…. There is more attention paid to them. There are more development programs around. People are more comfortable with having women in leadership positions.

She then offered a list of pitfalls for women to avoid. From her point of view, too many women make the mistakes of expecting to be treated like a second-class citizen, not knowing one's strengths and limitations, not socializing with people to establish connections, not comparing salaries or asking for the raise, staying in assistant or associate positions for too long, not having a mentor or a coach, worrying about being viewed as a woman instead of focusing on the job, not wanting to serve on committees, not getting involved in community or non-profit organizations, and not getting advanced degrees. In particular, she clarified that she was not blaming the victims or talking about faults, but about the fact that in most situations, "no one is going to be advanced without extraordinary productivity," whether the person is a man or a woman.

Except for suggesting that women take the opposite approach to the activities on the above list, Hope advised future leaders to develop a passion for reading because

> You have to be able to read constantly. Keep up-to-date. Find something that you like, whatever area of higher education: student affairs, finance, research, academic administration, public relations, etc. Find an area that you like, and you'll go to the top.

As to her way of making important and difficult decisions, the secret of success is to "think a lot, balance, weigh, talk to people. Never make a decision in a hurry; it's always going to be wrong. Sleep on it, go for a walk, ask for input, revisit, think, think, think, think."

The most senior participant of this study in terms of age, Hope is also the most fortunate and the oldest second-generation college student of the nine informants. Unlike other first-generation college students included in this study, Hope's father had a college degree and her family, including her parents and grandparents, all valued education highly and held equal expectations for her as they did for her three brothers. No wonder she regarded her solid family background as the greatest asset she had in her life, a background that helped her build inimitable wings to fly toward infinite dreams.

### Irene: You've Got to Have Strategic Support along the Way

Irene serves as an "at-will" vice president at a large public university. A middle child from a well-educated family, she grew up in an academic environment because both of her parents were college employees. She has a doctoral degree and is married but has no children. Early in her senior year of college, she found her lifelong calling—working with college students. Since then, she has spent almost three decades actively developing herself through solid graduate training and accumulating extensive experience as well as expertise in student services.

Before coming to her current institution, on a step-by-step basis, she advanced from entry- to mid-level administrative posts at four other colleges/universities, gaining all sorts of experience and expertise in her area. After serving her current university for more than a

decade, Irene moved into her current executive position, where she capably uses her

specialties in conflict resolution, student affairs, organizational change, strategic planning,

collaborative management, personnel development, and program supervision/assessment.

When asked how she feels about her journey in the profession, she stated, energetically,

> It's been wonderful. I have learned every step along the way. There've been bumps
> along the road. There've been some hard times, but over all it's been very positive. I
> felt very blessed and very fortunate because I love what I do. So it's been a good
> journey, very good journey.

*Success Factors*

Modestly, Irene credits her success to the many good, strong mentors in her career.

Early in her teenage years, her remarkable talents and evident potential made her first

supervisor decide to groom her for medical administration by giving her more responsibilities.

That opportunity to "grow professionally well beyond my years at an early age" has greatly

benefited her. Knowing how good she was, another former supervisor and mentor created a

job for her after he was recruited to another institution. She also had a great relationship with

her first female boss who then became a great reference for her when she applied at her

current institution, where she gradually advanced from mid- to top-level leadership positions.

Irene believes that her interpersonal relationship skills and her integrity as a

professional also helped her succeed. A very relationship-oriented leader, she became so

popular all over the campus that both the search committee and the president decided to

cancel the national search and put her in her current post. Her capacity for managing

teamwork, forging strategic alliances, and handling budgets as well as financial matters all

contribute to her success. Her commitment to participatory leadership helps her enjoy

working collaboratively with others. When first coming to her current institution, she relied

on establishing strategic alliances to help her adapt to the new environment. She noted,

You've got to have strategic support along the way. I would say always be willing to learn from others who have come before you and who are more seasoned and have more experience. Be very open to learning from them…. And if you make a mistake, you need to own that mistake, and be honest about it, and learn from it, and move on.

At the personal level, she credits her strong work ethic and the "driven nature" that she inherited from her father as a professional. Some of her best attributes are her effectiveness with both men and women because of her background as the coach's daughter; her exceptional high energy level, which definitely fits her work with students; her real love for people; her passion for her work; and her deliberate efforts to "round out my resume." Although Irene appreciated her solid White Christian background, she

> …knew intuitively that I needed to learn about the rest of the world if I were going to be effective because you can't be good at working with people if you don't understand people. And everybody isn't Christian. Everybody isn't White…. So I really worked very planfully and deliberately about exposing myself and putting myself in situations that would stretch me…. that desire to expand my horizons has been a part of my life.

*Barriers and Challenges*

Before Irene came to her current institution, she neither regarded politics highly nor did she view herself as a political person. Soon she realized that she was naïve even to think that a university campus could be non-political. Since then, learning to "navigate the political environment" has become her biggest challenge, especially after she joined the senior leadership team.

Since Irene is young and does not have a very long history with the institution, finding her voice in the upper echelon has been a continual challenge. Whether because of age, lack of experience, or gender, she found herself being ignored at times and did not feel free to speak up in the cabinet when she first joined the group. One male colleague likes to tease her as the "touchy-feely one" and spoke to her very disrespectfully once in front of

everyone in a meeting. Effective communication with some of the very senior vice presidents also seemed very difficult to achieve. Unassumingly, she stated,

> I often feel like I've got to learn how to speak my case stronger and more effectively in lots of different conversations. I say it, and so it's getting said; but sometimes I don't think it's really HEARD. So that's a challenge I'm working on. Hasn't quite, I don't feel I'm quite alive on that one, so I'm working on it.

Irene had never sensed another challenge until recently. She was surprised to find that her number two person, who is 12 years older and more politically astute than she is, has been secretly competing with her. She did not figure out how "sometimes he's political in how he operates with me" until sometime later, and

> …that's a challenge because you really want to have the person who's in that role be absolutely someone you can confide in and trust. But I've sensed the competition now, which is making it a little different…that's been kind of hard for me because he and I have always been really close and had a good working relationship.

With the institution's first female president taking office and reorganizing the cabinet into a small group of gender-balanced vice presidents, gender became paradoxically both a more and a less visible factor in the upper echelon. Irene witnessed the interesting transition process and the many overt and covert changes as the cabinet changed from a male- to a female-dominated group. Humorously, she described how at first, some male colleagues "almost wanted to dismiss female vice presidents." They were so preoccupied with figuring out the new women president and the new rules of the game that their behaviors made it clear they were not dealing with their female colleagues at the same time.

The most difficult situation Irene ever encountered in her career occurred about five years ago. During a major conflict between one of the former presidents and her predecessor, both sides tried to drag her into the war by asking her for "all kinds of ammunition to use against" each other. She told both of them that she could not and would not betray either of

them because such action was inappropriate and against her integrity. Unfortunately, the original relatively good relationship between Irene and her predecessor was destroyed completely, which "was a very painful process for me…because I'd worked for her for several years."

To make the matter worse, that president allowed her predecessor's support staff to stay in the office while her predecessor, "who was so angry with me," took a one-year leave of absence. Not only did that staff remain in the office, but she became Irene's primary support person after her predecessor resigned. Not knowing what the staff member had been told, Irene suffered from a very difficult relationship with her because "she fought me on everything…. It was not good. So that whole year, I came to work and I was on my hands and knees. It was just uncomfortable."

The state's poor economic situation has produced problems for Irene, too. She lamented the difficulty for her to first get her current position because of people's support, but then having to turn around and make tough budget-cut decisions.

> …the first couple of years, it was VERY difficult. Since I've been in this job, all I have done is take away from people…we have been cut to the bone. We've done it through vacant positions, reassigning people, merging responsibilities, and eliminating support positions. So it's been very taxing and that has been a HUGE challenge. The leadership challenge for me now is how to keep people motivated, positive, high morale, which you have to have working with students and young people.

Irene is concerned with the price women leaders often must pay for career success, too. Being too focused on reaching her career goal, she missed the opportunity to get married early enough to have children. Although she knows she is not alone because she has seen how female vice presidents for student affairs are much less likely than their male counterparts to be married and have children, she cannot help mourning the fact that she does

not have children. She has always wanted to be a mother. The tradeoff of missing that part of her life "is a huge loss for me."

*Coping Strategies*

The most effective strategy for handling complicated political and union issues is finding strong, seasoned political mentors; seeking their counsel and protection "under their wings," so to speak; and learning from them. She believes that an effective leader should always have "someone who's really good at understanding politics and the political nature of higher education…[and] somebody who you absolutely can trust to help you." While greater risk is involved when confiding in people who work at your institution, "by the same token, it is helpful to have someone at your current institution because they know that institution and the dynamics there."

> Irene then described the steps and skills needed to navigate the political landscape.

> …in order to navigate, you've got to be able to assess what the issues are; you've got to be able to prioritize whatever issues there are; and then you've got to figure out strategically how to move the agenda for each of those issues. And that might be building alliances in order to get that agenda addressed. It might mean putting other things on the blackboard. It might mean figuring out how to find resources to address that issue. It could be a variety of things. So there's a lot of encompassing and navigating in order to be able to really navigate.

However, before women can master campus politics, they must first overcome the barrier of focusing on the negative connotations of the word "politics." She used herself as an example to warn against the avoidance of learning political skills early on. The reasons are two-fold. First, politics is inescapable since all workplaces are political. Second, over the years, she sees how politics can be used positively to address the greater good of the institution.

With more experience and knowledge about the institution, Irene now feels more confident to speak up freely in cabinet meetings. The strategic alliances she fostered at

different levels have helped her obtain success and effectiveness as a leader as well. Then, when she first became vice president, she took the initiative to schedule regular individual meetings with some of her very senior vice president colleagues, who "have been very good about taking me under their wings and kind of showing me things and teaching me things, and mentoring me." In particular, she finds herself really fortunate to have the female president as her mentor, her confidant, and her best supporter on campus.

For personal attacks and conflicts, open, direct, one-on-one conversation behind closed doors works best for her. After Irene confronted the male vice president in his office and let him know how she did not appreciate the way he spoke to her in front of everybody, "He apologized, and he's never done it since." Similarly, she addressed the competition issue directly with her associate vice president and has kept her eyes open since then. He actually admitted that he has been competing with her but promised to control himself. So "It's been better since I've done that. I hit it head on." She did the same thing with a male direct report who tried to have her make difficult decisions for him. After she told him how she expected him to take up his leadership role and solve problems at his level, the behavior also changed.

With the conflict between her bosses, Irene decided that she would rather resign than get caught in the middle. Both her mother and the man who is now her husband supported her plan and offered to help if she, indeed, must resign to get out of that political tussle. Fortunately, the problem was solved without the need for her resignation. Even today, Irene feels good about the way she handled that difficult situation. However, she had to deal with the resistance from her predecessor's administrative assistant who believed Irene did her predecessor harm. Irene's attempt to try to improve their relationship was taken for granted. As a result,

I called her on a few things at the end of last fall, and she was very unhappy with me because I was holding her feet to the fire…. Since January, our relationship has gotten a lot better. I backed off although her behavior hasn't really changed. I did back off, and she quit.

Unfortunately, Irene cannot do much with the budget cuts. Since the cuts are campus-wide, the strategy of "picking your battles" proved to be most effective. She has pulled up her sleeves, doing what she can with her part without complaining. So when she needs something and puts the request on the table, she has always been able to secure approval. Whenever possible, she attends to her staff's needs and uses different occasions to boost their morale. To help her team understand how difficult the budget-cutting process is and how she has done everything she can, she once handed the budget over to them. After figuring out that there, indeed, was no better way to deal with the shortfall, they gave the budget back to her unchanged.

While Irene is still open to the idea of having children, her husband disagrees because of the risk involved. Although her husband also works long hours, he expects her to take time like he does to nourish their relationship, which has been good for her. To remain balanced and effective at a personal level, Irene takes care of herself by exercising regularly, enjoying both her work and her time outside of work, and taking her annual leave. Her solid religious background and prayers have also become important sources of strength for her.

*Views on Women in Leadership*

Given her work for four male and female presidents and her own experience and observations in the profession, Irene claims that women leaders usually operate quite differently from their male counterparts. Affirmatively, she stated,

Women tend to be much more collaborative and interested in building consensus and men are much more interested in being authoritarian or posturing to get done what they need to get done. Women…focus on the relationship and get work done by

building strong consensus and strong allies and strong bases of support…. I think women's leadership style is absolutely VERY effective and powerful.

The difference between how men and women commenced and led the cabinet meetings, according to Irene's observation, has been "night and day." Women are more open and collaborative in terms of information-sharing and decision-making while men at the helm tend to keep their plans in their heads and rely more on informal than formal decision-making processes. With the female president, she feels well included as part of the decision-making team. With the male presidents, she "never really knew what the true deal was…because it was never clear." Irene also admires the female president's commitment to equity, her ability to make tough decisions, her determination to follow through, and her willingness to stand up for those decisions rather than try to please everybody. As to differences in male vice presidents' behavior in the predominantly male versus female cabinet, Irene also described it as "night and day." Irene finds it both funny and "fascinating" to witness how that transition has changed the dynamics in the cabinet.

Like most other women leaders, Irene believes that had she been a man, she would be like most of her male colleagues in terms of having a wife taking care of the kids at home. Seeing how women can be so effective and powerful in leadership roles, she still encourages talented women to "assert themselves and move into leadership roles." However, while Irene believes that women should make good use of their strengths as women, she seriously warned against falling into "the trap of trying to model general typical male behavior when they're IN those leadership roles…[because] it's not effective at all." It does not work for women, she asserted, because those authoritarian and posturing modes alienate people and particularly irritate women.

For future leaders, Irene advised them first to have a solid base of expertise. Interpersonal skills are the next most important element of career success. They must also prepare themselves with skills needed by people in leadership roles, such as decision-making, negotiation, budgeting, political navigation, expertise in administration and legal affairs, and finally, fundraising for times of declining resources. For those who want both a career and a family, they must "pay attention to both" and have a clear plan that incorporates the issue of timing. She then shared how some women achieved this goal by partially stepping out of the profession to have children and then coming back after their children enter elementary school. Even with that said, she stressed that women will always have more difficult decisions to make than men will when facing the dilemma of choosing between family and work.

An extremely warm, energetic, eloquent, and sincere speaker, Irene touches lives and work with genuine love and passion coming from within. She receives great support from her family and is solidly grounded in her educational and religious background. As young and successful as she is, she showed absolutely no sign of arrogance or superiority during the whole interview process. With her competence and capacity for continued growth and learning, greater success and significant contributions to the academy in the future can be easily foreseen.

<center>Summary</center>

While each of these successful women leaders has her own unique story, valuable lessons can be learned from similar patterns that have emerged from both their career successes and challenges. One obvious pattern of success, for instance, is that they all gained visibility, reputation, and the opportunity to lead by proving that they can and will make a difference for themselves, for people around them, and for their institutions. Even after they

assumed leadership roles, they still had to pass the "survival of the fittest" test by employing every instinct, adaptation, and available resource to survive and thrive. Instead of being affected by seemingly insurmountable adversities in life, they are inspired by them. With great competence and valiant, tenacious spirits, they persist through all kinds of obstacles on their path to success. Rather than being defeated, great qualities are called out from them, making them even better and stronger leaders. So today, they serve as the greatest witnesses of women's triumphs in the profession, and their stories become useful roadmaps for future leaders as they begin their own journeys in higher education administration.

CHAPTER FIVE: EMERGENT THEMES

Together, these nine outstanding women leaders have made history for their current and/or previous institutions. Whether they served as the "first" female president, vice president, dean, director, department head, or faculty member, their combined interest is in doing a job so well that the door of opportunity will continue to be open for all. As indicated in Chapter Three, a loosely structured or a less prestructured design was used during the data-collection and analysis process so that as many as possible of these relevant key points and perspectives shared by these highly successful women can be preserved. Salient themes derived from their experiences not only enrich the limited existing literature about senior women leaders in higher education, but also serve as examples of best practice for those who are struggling in the system without sufficient assistance or support.

In Chapter Five, the following six themes that emerged from the nine two-hour, one-on-one interviews conducted for this study will be presented: (1) effective leadership strategies: earning your place at the table, (2) tests and trials, (3) maintaining focus and political savvy, (4) numbers matter: the rules change, (5) gender as a two-edged sword, and (6) competing as a woman: prepared and ready. These six themes provide a rich and vivid description of just what it took for the informants to succeed as senior executives in their universities, the difficulties they experienced over the years, the skills or strategies on which they relied to help them advance, the significant difference that numbers can make to women's leadership experiences at the cabinet level, the role that gender played in their careers, and salient pieces of advice they wanted to share with future leaders.

Effective Leadership Strategies: Earning Your Place at the Table

The first major theme that emerged from this study focuses on four success strategies utilized by the nine senior women leaders. Under this major theme are these four sub-themes: (a) being the best, (b) building trust and relationships, (c) knowing and being oneself, and (d) mentoring and learning. These sub-themes are significant because all informants regarded them as the fundamental elements of their success.

*Being the Best*

Unanimously, all informants agreed that being the best at what they do generated visibility, recognition, opportunity, and success for them. Behind this critical element of success are personal drive and dedication; professional expertise and credibility; and leadership skills as well as institutional savvy. Interestingly, the drive to "outperform" is the most commonly identified strategy for success. They are all competent and competitive and want nothing less than to live life to its fullest, to be the best they can be, and to make as much difference as they can make. As one informant, Carol, stated, "we're all achievers and self-motivated and want to fly over the bar, not just skate over the bar."

As the nine senior women leaders reflected on reasons behind their success today, they used phrases such as "being twice as good," "being better than anybody else," "holding a really high standard," "being known as an expert," "doing a really, really, really good job," "having done an extremely satisfactory job," or "having a really good reputation for getting things done" to explain why they think they stood out. In other words, nothing replaces superlative performance, at least not for those who want to achieve greatness and stay in positions like university presidencies and vice presidencies. One informant, Betty, explained how:

…cultivating excellence is everything…that's having really high standards. So if someone brings that kind of an attitude to what they do, they're going to excel because they are not willing to settle for mediocrity…. And it's the person…who really understands how to do a job well…who has really high standards…who does take those extra steps; who does follow through; who gets things done promptly; who has ideas…those are the people who do stand out…. I don't think that I would be where I am today if I hadn't had some successes in key projects…and it can be in little things that give you recognition or give you exposure…but if it gets the right people's attention, people want to have good people around them…. Wouldn't YOU want someone like that to work for you?

Personal drive alone, however, is insufficient in terms of explaining why the pressure to perform and to prove oneself is always present, particularly for women in predominantly male fields or professions. Coming from a traditionally male academic discipline, Grace noted that, "You have to be better than anybody else to overcome the networking and all the other things." Fortunately, her stubbornness and rebelliousness helped her enjoy the process of proving herself to be equal to or even more competent than the men with whom she studied, worked, or competed. Similarly, Carol recognized the complexity of the pressure for women to be better than anybody else.

…over time I think all of us, particularly women in areas where there are not large numbers [of women], put additional pressure on ourselves to always be better than those around us. I think there's a part of it that's from ourselves because we assess the environment and see the evidence is of sexism or racism.

Besides the constant stress to perform, Betty, Diane, and Emily expressed the fear of screwing up, not just for themselves but also for other women and minorities who want to follow their paths to executive positions. Years of experience made Emily believe that to stay even with her male counterparts, she must "work twice as hard, and be twice as good." Similarly, one of Alice's secrets to success is to:

…hold a much higher standard for myself than anybody else does…[because] people who do not want women and minorities to advance, and I can only speak really from the woman's standpoint, put up the "she doesn't have the experience," for whatever

because they know they can't get away with saying, "She's a woman." And so my strategy is always to do my homework, be smarter, work harder, and out-think them.

Whether the pressure to perform is from themselves, from the environment in which they reside, or both, all of the informants have a strong work ethic and achieve success because of their extraordinary expertise, the quality of their work, and their overall productivity. Once they accept a position, they devote themselves fully and wholeheartedly to it. After Grace realized that she was spending more than 100 hours a week on her job, she thought to herself,

> Gosh, I mean, this can't be for real. Nobody can work that many hours all the time. So I talked to some other provosts and asked, "How do you get the hours under control?" And it turns out that the ones who I thought were doing a good job also are working very long hours. And the ones who are not? Number one, I really didn't think they were doing that great a job; and number two, they do it by making themselves inaccessible. Simply don't make more than two appointments a day; or don't answer emails unless they are from certain people, and you have time. But I don't think that's doing the job well.

Besides establishing one's credibility with a long history of success and dedication, leadership skills such as decision-making and financial management are also very important. Lack of decisiveness can cost leaders their effectiveness or even their positions as Alice, Diane, and Irene have witnessed. A good example is the story Alice shared.

> I went into the provost position in a very unusual circumstance. I was at the time vice president for research and public service. And right after I was hired as VP for research, the University of [X] hired a gentleman for the academic affairs position. And we were in the middle of the early 90s' economic downturn…we were taking like $9 million out of the budget. And we had done a planning process that identified where we were going to take it, and we were kind of marching on. And the new VP couldn't make decisions; and he just became paralyzed by it, and it began to really frustrate the deans. And the deans then went to the president and said, "You need to send this individual [away]. Either fire him or send him back to the faculty. He has tenure."…and then he [the president] said, "What will I do if you want him gone tomorrow? What do you want?" And the deans said, "Alice can make the decision. She doesn't have to have been a dean. We know that she's dealt with the budget; she's dealt with strategic planning; she's dealt with accreditation; she's dealt with all that; she's tripled the research effort here at the university. But whether we like all of

her decisions or not, she WILL make a decision." For most people, the fact that you lead…you make a decision is more important than what that decision is.

Both coming from outside higher education, Betty and Frances expressed their concern about the slow shared-governance process because the external communities to which they respond move much faster. Betty's observation has been:

> We've had a committee studying general education for 10 years, a decade. You could have a committee that just goes on and on because people want to study. They want to overturn every stone in order to make the right decision. This is truly not the best way of making a decision. You do need to be sure that you've got the right evidence, and then you've got all the pieces; but there comes a point in time that you have to decide. And I think the strengths that I have brought within an academic environment are that I respect analysis and I respect input, but I'm also good at making a decision and saying, "Okay, we've done enough. We're going to now move forward."

Financial management, or, as Alice said, the ability to "follow the money," is another requirement for cabinet executives. Carol believed that her mental capacity and analytical skills are reasons why she succeeded as a university president.

> I'm really good analytically, and I can do most numbers off the top of my head, you know, in terms of… So I have an order of magnitude of what things cost. I don't know precisely what things cost, but I know an order of magnitude, so I know whether I'm making a $10 decision or a $10 million decision or what comes in-between. I don't worry about having that precise; I just worry about the order of magnitude.

Finally, institutional savvy was another factor that contributed to many of the informants' advancement and continued leadership success. Carol, Diane, Frances, Grace, and Hope all acknowledged that one of the reasons they were identified as the best choice for their top leadership positions was their long, positive history with the institution as an alumnae, faculty member, or administrator. Institutional fit never came up as a problem for them because they were already part of the system. Frances, for instance, regarded her longevity with her institution as a great asset because "my experiences with the University of [X] in a variety of capacities extend beyond anyone else's established experiences."

Because they are so outstanding, their superiors often come to them for their expertise. They have been asked by institutional leaders to serve because no one else can do the job better than they can, whether stabilizing the institution, transforming and strengthening institutional functions, navigating the institution through various crises, or leading the institution toward a higher level of development and a brighter future.

*Building Trust and Relationships*

The second personal leadership strategy that ensured the informants' success is having good, trusting relationships with critical constituents. Without trusting relationships with key constituents, they can not function effectively, thus thwarting their ability to move into senior executive-level positions. When asked how trusting and positive relationships can be established, the participants' universal answer was: "Let your work speak for itself." Although being comfortable in one's own skin, being outgoing, and being good at building connections with others help foster good interpersonal relations, nothing speaks louder than what you actually do. Therefore, the informants all spend a lot of time proving to others that they are trustworthy and truly committed to pulling the community together to do great things for their institutions. They accomplish their goals through listening, giving and earning respect, comprehensive communication, information sharing, consensus building, community service, teamwork, collaboration, and socialization.

Being in the right place at the right time is one of the strategies used most frequently by most of the informants to build relationships with critical stakeholders such as legislators, board members, and institutional leaders. Consequently, informants like Carol, Diane, Emily, Frances, and Grace all talked about figuring out where leaders of formal and informal power

groups go were and showing up there as a means of establishing relationships as well as

gathering important information. Grace stressed that:

> …you have to plug into networks…. I can image that there are places where decisions are made on the golf course…and I can imagine that if it were important for me to do this job that I play golf with certain people, I would like to play golf.

> In addition to maintaining good relationships with leaders, the ability to work with

colleagues as a team is also very important. Frances talked about how

> The trust between colleagues is EXTREMELY important, and I think you have to work at it. It doesn't just happen overnight. I mean, people come into those roles. They are appointed by…a new president who typically has a number of appointments that she or he is going to make. Who guarantees the chemistry? Nobody. There's no promise of the chemistry. You have to work to create the chemistry. And when you commit to working to create the chemistry and maintain that chemistry, that means that even if that person was not YOUR first choice to take this job or was not YOUR favorite person in the whole world, he or she is here now. Better figure out a way to work together. And I think that's really, really important.

When cabinet members have good relationships with each other, they help each other,

collaborate with each other, or even mentor each other in different ways. To establish

relations with other vice presidents, some informants rely on communication while others

focus on collaboration and socialization. As Irene recalled,

> One of the things that I did when I first became VP is I scheduled regular meetings with the other vice presidents, so I could have regular contact with them. So I could talk with them and meet with them on different issues. So I did that. And actually have disbanded it because I don't feel a need for it as much. Now we catch up with each other as needed; but the relationships are established, so I don't think it's necessary to have the formal meeting on the calendar.

> For Diane, the lone female vice president in the cabinet, playing sports with her

colleagues and collaboration works best in terms of building relations with them. Her

experience has been:

> …you have to be able to socialize with males. And it hasn't hurt me that I know how to play golf; hasn't hurt me that I can beat just about all of them, except for one or two of them. And it doesn't hurt that I am competitive.… I don't have to ask them to

play golf. They often ask me to play golf…. I enjoy playing their games. I enjoy playing golf with them. I enjoy watching sports with them; but that's me, and I think having that kind of interest has helped me considerably in building those relationships…sometimes you can build the relationship that if I supported your initiative, they felt compelled to at least listen and support the one that I come back with. And that's collegiality,…and it's not just paying lip service. It might be that I say to one of my colleagues, "Yeah, if you don't have enough money, here's $25,000 from my budget to help you get that done." It's because I trust that individual to spend the money at it. Because I think it's a great idea. He doesn't have all of the money needed, and so here I'm supporting it. We do that a lot.

With faculty members, respect, listening, fairness, continuous communication to carry people along, information sharing, inclusion, and a transparent decision-making process work best. Carol, Grace, and Hope, for instance, believe that their success as provost lies in their respect for others, their understanding of people's different convictions, their efforts in keeping the faculty informed, their commitment to open communication, and their fairness with all the deans. Constant, effective communication is particularly important because, like Carol said, "faculty do not debrief faculty." Grace added that:

> …you need to be very patient, and you need to make an honest effort to understand the position of different people, even if the positions are totally unreasonable. To find out why…. I mean usually there are reasons why people behave the way they do or have certain convictions…. I've had faculty come to me and say, "I disagree with what you did, but I support the way you went about it." So, you know, when you have several hundred people, each of whom has a different opinion, you can't make them all happy, but you can be open about it and state the reasons why you've done something, and go from there…. I do a lot of things that they KNOW take a lot of time and effort. For example, ever since I started, I have written a monthly update to the campus; and it isn't a formalistic thing. It's always, say now, if I were a faculty member, what would I want to know about what's going on? And I've done that every single month. I wrote number 88 this week…and I think that kind of communication is appreciated for this is one example of something I wouldn't have to do. Nobody told me to do this, but it's making sure people are informed, if they want to be.

Another important principle is fairness. All three of them make sure that there are no secret "in" groups or favors given to certain individuals or cliques. What Carol did was:

Because I couldn't go to every college's every event, I figured out a rotation that worked for me so that I did something for every college (but it wasn't necessarily the same thing, you know?) in the course of the time with them that I identified to be reasonable. I talked with the deans about what's the most important thing for me to do FOR THEM to make THEM successful, okay? And then we prioritized that way, and everybody had the same question. So everybody had to pick. So then when one event turned out to be better than another, it wasn't because I picked the winners or losers on some of those things. So they began to develop a sense of rhythm within the organization. And I assess my calendar so that the most aggressive dean did not automatically get all of the time slots.

When working with support staff, Betty, Carol, Diane, Frances, and Irene said the key to success is to build a safe environment, particularly if leaders expect their teams to pursue continual improvement and excellence. As Carol noted,

If you tell people they have to be risk taking, and they take a risk and make a mistake, they've got to believe that you're not going to do "I got you" at that point, okay? And they have to believe that when you tell them that you're going to try to do something to the best of your ability, you're going to do it, even if you fail.

As Frances concluded, "No man is an island…you can't just sort of assume that you can call the shots. You can't. So you have to have other relationships that help you get your work done." Without basic trust, respect, and relationships with their colleagues as well as staff, these women would not have been as successful as they are today.

*Knowing and Being Oneself*

The next pattern that emerged is the need to be grounded in who they are and what they believe, to know their strengths and work to eliminate their weaknesses, to accept their limitations and embrace people with different talents, to be open enough to adapt themselves without losing the ground for which they stand, to develop their own way of leading, and to do the right thing or make the right decisions for their institutions. Without the base of knowing and being oneself, informants would not have been able to weather the many storms of skepticism, criticism, resistance, and conflicts along the way. Like Carol said,

…because you're human, you're going to have a batting average. You're not going to be perfect. And, you know, some things that I think are wrong, others may think were the greatest things since sliced bread; and the things that they think were wrong may not be what I think is wrong. So there are always going to be some dissidents in the environment, and some tension…and unintended consequences of even the best of actions and the best of strategies, and you can't deny that. You just have to work with it.

Over the years, Carol also learned that leading her huge, complex university requires more than a linear, single value system. She knew what she needed was a clear vision as well as a complex value system. Therefore, she developed

…an internal gyroscope...that kind of adjusts to different orientations, different facets without losing its grounding…that keeps you centered on values and grounded as an individual while all the world shifts around you…. So this little thing here [pointing to a colorful gyroscope on her desk], the red ball is the core value, okay? And the circles are things that happen in your world…none of them moves at the same time in the same direction, and they shift on you and that's the way things go. So I should be able to think about things in that way with that complexity [and] at the same time keep the rings in focus and keep the rings moving together…you also have to have some sense of vision…so you have to be able to use that analogy like to add rings and reposition rings and do other things. But they're still never going to work in the right linear fashion. The world's going to cause them to work in a different way. You have to figure that out.

Knowing and being oneself means accepting and addressing one's weaknesses as well. Other than following their inclinations, the informants said they also worked on their weak points by expanding themselves constantly. For limitations that cannot be "fixed," they turned to others for help. In fact, surrounding oneself with very talented individuals is one of the most commonly used strategies among university presidents and vice presidents, as reported by 6 of the 9 participants. For this, Carol explained,

…you cannot be afraid to surround yourself with people who are better than you are, whether they are male or female. And many women are concerned about that because they believe that the organization will choose between one of the two women and leave them behind. But that means then you don't necessarily work to have the best talent around you because of those sort of underlying gender politics of the organization. So gender politics doesn't work only as women against men; it works as women against women, and you have to put both sets of gender politics aside.

Due to the low number of women in executive positions, women often have to learn from their male supervisors. Those women who overly emulate male leadership behaviors usually sense the need to adjust their approach. Reflectively, Betty asserted,

> In hindsight looking back over my own career to date, I think one of the pitfalls [for women] is that women think they have to be like men. I don't think you have to be like a man. I think you have to be yourself. You have to know yourself and be yourself and not be afraid of that—to bring sort of your femininity to bear because those are good traits, and they are positive traits.

Emily concurred. By being herself and expressing her caring as well as supportive attitudes in her own way, she helped people realize that "I was a real person. I wasn't an automaton. So it's more about your having to break down their defenses rather than your having to stop being who you are." Together, Alice, Betty, Carol, Emily, Frances, and Irene encouraged women to develop their own way of leading.

Yet, how can women lead in their own way? Alice responded,

> By being themselves. I think we try to model ourselves after too many other people, and we lose our own sense of self. And it's easy particularly in the presidency to get handlers, you know? The PR guy wants me to always wear red or black or whatever, or the donor relations VP is always asking me to do X, Y, or Z in a certain format. You have to…. You have to say, "Wait a minute, I have to be true to myself." And to do that you've got to know enough about yourself. I mean, you have to get a sense of self, and you have to have a sense of what sounds sincere and real from you.

Carol added that no matter what techniques, skills, or traits leaders try to emulate, they must make sure that those behaviors fit with who they are. Whatever she did, Carol did it in her own terms "because I'm not going to turn into a different person."

Furthermore, being who they are and being grounded in what they believe makes doing the right thing or making the right decision easier. Informants used expressions such as "to live with myself," "to look at myself in the mirror," "to do the right thing," "to never do things that are illegal, immoral, or unethical," "to make the right decisions," and "to put

institutional good before everything" to express their conviction about doing the right thing

for themselves and for their institutions. Irene, for instance, talked about how she would

rather resign than do things that violate her conscience.

> I need to know my bottom line…. I need to know what would be the point in time
> where I would walk away. And that's empowering to know that. If I were working for
> somebody who asked me to do something that would cause me not to be able to look
> at myself in the mirror, I need to walk rather than be insubordinate…. I always have
> said I've got to be able to look at myself in the mirror…. People aren't all going to
> like you [or] agree with you. You've got to do what you know to be right…. If I were
> asked to do something that I believe was immoral, unethical, illegal, I would
> walk…the higher you go, the harder it is to do that cause you're walking away from a
> lot more. But I think it's even more important that you do that because you've got to
> live with yourself. And I think too many people sell themselves out for high paying
> jobs. And I don't want to be that kind of person. So, when you know that about
> yourself, it's very freeing.

Alice, Carol, Frances, and Grace then explained that for them, doing the right thing

also meant guarding the best interest of their institutions and putting the institutional good

above everything, including personal preferences. As Grace said, "My duty as provost is to

work for the university and to make sure that others who have responsibilities don't do

anything that will damage the university." Frances assumed the same responsibility of

watching over her alma mater and used this important responsibility of hers to remind critical

stakeholders to focus on the greater good for the institution.

When a conflict exists between individual and institutional good, Grace believes that

the best thing leaders can do is to choose the latter. For instance, to make ends meet for the

university, no matter how difficult it was to release people she had known for years, she had

no choice but to do it. To correct the wrongdoings of the football coach, Alice insisted on

firing him despite strong resistance and attacks from the community. Similarly, Carol

confessed, "Sometimes I just go ahead because I think it's the right thing to do." When asked

how she knew if she made a sound judgment, her answer was by checking if "it meets the

value test and recognizes the stewardship functioning of the institution." Her duty as a

president is to make sure that she has a vision for her institution and that:

> [X] University is a better place when I leave it than when I got here; and it has
> handled the short-term challenges well; and it has more options as an organization for
> being better when I leave than when I came…. It's not whether I had more options.
> It's whether [X] University has more options…. I have to be satisfied when I leave
> here that I have done my best for [X] University, and if I leave on principle, that's
> fine.

Clearly, being grounded helps orient the respondents as they function in their

extremely demanding and complicated working environments. They hold tight to their values

for these reasons:

- so they will not do things they will regret.

- so they become better and more confident leaders.

- so they keep their sense of self while making necessary adaptations.

- so they can gradually figure out a way to lead in their own terms.

- so they do not lose sight of the core values.

- and so they can focus on the vision they set for their institutions.

*Mentoring and Learning*

Seven of the nine informants have mentors to help them along the way by providing

encouragement, inspiration, counsel, connections, or opportunities. Their mentors are their

current or previous supervisors, family members, or leaders they met through community

involvement. Readily, Alice shared how one of her former supervisors, whom she regarded

as a friend and mentor, nudged her into the provost position that she had no intention of

pursuing originally.

> …I was the Vice President for Research at [X University] at the time, and when Fred
> [President of the U of X] called me in, he said he wanted me to take over the
> academic affairs office. I said, "I'm not going to do it!" I said, "I enjoy being Vice

President for Research. I am having a great time. I have my life under control. I don't need you messing within my sandbox." And HE said, "Alice, one day you should be a president. And because you haven't been a dean or a department chair, you need to do this because it will be important for you to get a presidency." And he said, "So, I'm not giving you the option." And I said, "Well, you can't make me do it…I don't want to do it without talking to the deans." He said, "Well, they're all in the other room." They were all in the conference room. He said, "Just go in and talk to them." He said, "because you're going to start doing this Monday morning." …and he mentored me. He was hoping that I would follow him as president at the University of [X], but I decided that it would be better to start at a university fresh.

Like Alice, Irene's mentors were her supervisors. Because two of her former male bosses believed in her so much, they paved the way for her. She attributed a big part of her success to the fact that:

I had good mentors, and I also had people who introduced me to other people. So I had really good, important connections. I've been very deliberate about expanding my portfolio and making sure that I had strong mentors and experiences working for people who could teach me different things than what I already knew.

To make sure that she had experience working for women, she found herself an internship opportunity, a great role model, and a mentor because:

She's the kind of woman who could be very warm and friendly and attend to people who work for her, and at the very same time be efficient, get on her computer, get her work done. She didn't waste a minute, but everybody who worked for her felt well attended to. And I felt that was a wonderful skill that she has. She was efficient and warm at the same time. Those were traits in her that I admired and…so I worked with her for 6 months, and she was one of my references for this [her current] job.

Although Grace and Frances never had any formal mentoring experience, they relied on informal mentoring opportunities, meaning they used their keen observation and analytical skills to pick up good leadership skills from different people. By observing other leaders carefully as well as analyzing their successes and failures, they learned practical and precious lessons/skills. Grace's experience was:

I've always looked at other people in terms of what are they doing well and what are they not doing well. So in other words, from everybody…there are two sets of data. One is…I got a chance to see how I would like to do THIS…and the other is, I would

never ever be caught doing THAT, okay? So there are two things, and over time they get blended. That you adopt the things that you like and that you think will work for you. And you avoid the ones that you think are just absolutely awful.

Betty, Carol, Diane, and Irene did the same. Besides formal mentoring experience, they benefited tremendously from observing and taking note of good leadership skills people around them exhibit. Betty found that:

> …a lot of people are waiting for there to be one person to sort of be this guru who's going to tell them everything, and that's just not my experience. I think that a lot of adapting and succeeding does have to do with being a really good observer and watching other people and taking things, taking little pearls that you see that you notice from other people. And it is things like public speaking, how people handle difficult situations…for example…. I get a lot from the Governor in terms of public speaking. I think she's an excellent public speaker, and I pull a lot for my own public speaking the tone of the voice that she uses. I'm a very big observer. I pull things from different people.

As leaders of learning communities, learning has been an important part of the informants' lives and careers. Ideas like "it's a lifelong learning situation," "there is a lot to learn," "there's more to learn than you thought," "learn as you go," "learn from experience," or "you're never done learning" appeared repeatedly throughout all nine interviews. Besides learning from their mentors, the respondents talked about how they learn through participating in professional development programs, learning by doing, and personal reading.

The best way to keep up with the state-of-the-art as leaders is to attend leadership programs provided by well-known organizations such as the Institute for Educational Management at Harvard, the American Council on Education, or the Carnegie Center for Leadership Training for Directors and Aspiring Directors. For Betty, had she not attended the Leadership Development Program in North Carolina, she would not have been able to use a new coaching leadership approach to improve the very tense relationship she had with one of her female direct reports.

"Learn-as-you-go" is another popular strategy. Besides learning by doing on their own, some of them formed formal or informal groups to help them gain institutional savvy and improve their leadership skills. Except for self-reflection and evaluation, Alice used others' feedback to improve her teamwork skills. To make sure she and her senior leadership team functioned efficiently as a group, Alice and her vice presidents evaluated themselves honestly and openly so they could work better as a team. She noted,

> …all of this for me has been very informal. I've never called someone and said, "Would you come in and observe me doing this?" You know that's not, that's a very formal way. It's been mostly groups of each other sitting back and saying, "Well, that went remarkably well or remarkably poorly, and why?" You know? [laughs]…if you went in and said to my team members, "Have you had team group training?" They'd go, "Oh, my God, no!" And they haven't. We just work. We learned how to work together…. I mean we just learn by doing.

The last but not the least common practice of learning is through personal reading. Six of the 9 women stressed the importance of developing a passion for reading and said that they read constantly to help them solve problems and become better leaders. Grace, for instance, talked about how:

> I've always loved to read biographies in terms of what are the problems people had to deal with and how did they get over them. So I've always enjoyed that. But it's in piecing together little bits that fit and making a conscious decision if I ever see this…when something happens to you, and you have no clue what to do, if you have a whole batch of similar things that you read about, what did the other do with it. It helps.

None of the informants ever has the intention of resting on her laurels. Like Alice said, "I've always got room to grow." Because of their bountiful mental capacity for learning and continual self-improvement, they serve not only as leaders but also as great role models for the members of the learning communities they lead. Overall, these successful women feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to help make their institutions better places. They

sounded confident, energetic, positive, and grateful as they enumerated the many positive experiences they have had in their careers.

<div align="center">Tests and Trials</div>

With the request of the researcher during the interviews, many of these highly successful women candidly and generously shared unpleasant experiences. The purpose was to reveal the kind of difficult situations they had encountered so that a deeper understanding of what it took for people like them to succeed can be gained. As suggested by the title, the second major theme addresses difficulties or problems reported by the informants. These four sub-themes depict the various large and small tribulations with which the respondents had to deal: (a) obstacles in equal treatment and advancement, (b) skepticism and resistance, (c) political and financial struggles, and d) family and personal issues.

<div align="center">*Obstacles in Equal Treatment and Advancement*</div>

While a couple of them were lucky enough to have had no trouble with advancement or equal treatment, most admitted that, more or less, they were treated differently at different points of time or that they knew certain things had or could have hindered their upward mobility. Alice, Carol, and Emily all experienced being considered unqualified for the leadership positions they pursued because they did not have sufficient experience. Grace, Hope, and Irene all shared the experience of being underpaid once or for a lifetime. As Alice and Diane studied the pay scales and titles assigned to their male and female direct reports, they both found disparities. Diane remembered that:

> I do see that there is a pay scale that's given to men in this institution compared to what's paid to women… There is a difference…but I've been able to address it for people who report to me when I see that there's variation with a male being in a similar position who gets a different title…and I know that an example would be the second person in command in a division might have a title of assistant to the vice president or assistant vice president. And an assistant to the vice president is a totally

different title than an assistant vice president as there's a total difference between the title of assistant vice president and associate vice president. If we have similar responsibilities across divisions, titles ought to be similar if, in fact, the positions are similar. And I found a variation in those titles…and so…what I did was gather all of the information, made a case with: these responsibilities are equal; and, therefore, they need to have equal titles. Not about salary because people bring different experiences and years of service, etc., and level of education, you name it, to positions. So I wasn't in there arguing about a salary for this second tier under the vice presidents but arguing that the level of responsibility facing these positions ought to have equal standing in terms of title. And so the two females… and I talked with the [male] vice presidents and said that I want to do this, do you have any problems? No [knock on the table], go for it. And so I showed all the evidence, sent it to the Human Resources Department, and had the title changed for two females in assistant positions to associate vice presidents, equal to the male. And it worked. Now, there's no money exchanged there, but…for titles and for people's career paths, it makes a big difference; and it could have a monetary impact on the females if they would go to another position.

Finally, Diane and Emily both know how it feels to be pigeonholed in supportive leadership positions while Betty, Diane, and Frances understand that their lack of experience on the "academic side of the house" or a doctoral degree can become a big obstacle for their future progression in the academy.

A university president today, Alice went through several discriminatory encounters early on. The first time, she was told she could not get the position for which she applied because she did not have the degree that her male counterparts also did not have. Being able to laugh about it now, she told her story with great ease.

> …when I went for that assistant principalship…Mr. Summers, who was the personnel director for the school district, said, "Well, Alice, we can't hire you. You haven't finished your Master's. We can't make you an assistant principal." And I said, "But, the two guys who are already sitting over there who are assistant principals, they don't have theirs either. They're in the same program I'm in, and I'm nearer done than they are." "Well, the Board just passed it." "Well, Mr. Summer, when did they just pass that?" "The last Board meeting." "Well, that was strange. They must have done that while I was in the ladies' room because I was there!" I knew he was setting it up cause he didn't want to put a woman in there…and Jim [the principal who was looking for an assistant principal] was so mad that they were throwing up this silly roadblock.

The second time she interviewed for a supportive leadership position in a very male-dominated field, she had to respond to questions that were totally irrelevant to the job description and responsibilities. Then when she moved on to a similar but higher position at another university, her experience level was protested again. Even if she had experience working in a similar position in another university, the protesters insisted that she did not have enough experience and was not good enough for that leadership position. Candidly, she said, "You'd be lying if you said you didn't get angry about it."

Carol and Emily were once denied leadership posts for a similar reason. After being confirmed as the top pick of the search committee, Carol still did not get the position because she was thought not to have sufficient experience in certain areas. Knowing how having all the required credentials and experiences was critical, Emily accumulated "lots and lots of experiences." Yet, she seemed to never be able to catch up with the changing rules. Her biggest frustration was that:

> …if it's not one thing, it's another. Because when I came in at the ripe old age of [28], I didn't have any experience. So I worked, and I worked, and I worked, and I quickly got experience. So at [35], I didn't have any in-depth experience. So I got some in-depth experience and didn't have faculty experience. I got it. O.K. So I didn't have line experience; I got it. And now I don't have RECENT line or budget experience.

She found herself stuck in assistant or interim roles more often than in line positions. Likewise, Diane knew that she was going to be pegged if she did not do something about it.

Even though Hope was determined that she was going to get paid like men, somebody managed to pay her at a lower rate for a short period of time anyway. Since a husband and wife rarely receive tenure-track offers in the same geographical area, Grace did not even think about requesting a more equitable salary; consequently, she has been underpaid all of her life. When Irene was promoted to her current position, the male president

at that time told her that her offer was fair and so she took it; but she later realized that the offer was, in fact, not fair.

No matter how successful they were at their current vice presidential positions, Betty, Diane, and Frances knew that their non-academic career path and/or the lack of a doctoral degree would become a significant barrier in their advancement to a university presidency if they attempted to pursue one. When asked what changes she would make with her life and career if she had a chance, Diane responded determinedly,

> Get that doctorate. The one thing—get that doctorate. Get that dissertation written. That would be the one thing that I would change. If I had to do it again, I would have gone without a salary somehow, or taken off and done half time in order to write the dissertation even if it meant that I would have been paid half-time without official sabbatical leave from the university because.… I would hate to get through my retirement years and look back and say, "Ah, I wish I had done this."

*Skepticism and Resistance*

The second area of differential treatment is more subtle and indirect. As the informants tried to establish themselves in their fields and in higher education, were they readily and fully embraced? What difficulties or negative experiences did they have? Seven of the 9 participants reported that they encountered major or minor, explicit or implicit experiences with skepticism and resistance to their legitimacy as leaders along the way. To help the researcher capture the essence of the problems that either they or women they knew had experienced, some also shared unfortunate incidents with which they dealt or which they witnessed.

The first common encounter is constantly being questioned. The cloud of doubt and suspicion covers some of the informants' abilities, decisions, or legitimacy as leaders. People often ask: Why would a nice girl like you be in mathematics? What would you do if someone asked you to castrate a pig? Why are you the boss? What do you know about athletics? Is this

woman really committed to athletics? How did she get to that position? Can she do the job?

How will she interact with others? How did she do this? Can she follow the money?

As the only woman in her cohort in a male-dominated profession, Grace got used to

being questioned and invisible among the "gentlemen" early on. Positively, she concluded,

"It's hard when you grow up, but it makes it a lot easier once you've come to live with that."

Nevertheless, the chilly climate for women at the department level could get a lot worse. To

give an example of how a lone woman can be blatantly mistreated in male-dominated

disciplinary areas, Alice shared an incident that happened at one of the institutions she

served. She remembered that:

> …when I worked at the University of [X], I had a large prestigious department; and it had two of our top internationally known scientists in it. Now, I knew them for what they were or are, which is, you know, connivers who really didn't like women because I had [seen] both of them use some [women] and throw them away, if you will. But they came, and they wanted to hire this guy; and he had a trailing spouse, and they wanted to hire the woman as well. And we had some equity hire money…and they had a genuine need in their department for this. But this was the same two guys, one was department chair and the other one was just a scientist, this was the same two guys who never seemed to get any of these women to tenure…somewhere in the third or fourth year, they would come back here and try to fill the position with a guy. So this woman, she came and the first two years she was just… could do no wrong and then she got pregnant…[then] they located this woman, she was the only woman in the department at the time in a building by herself with no bathroom in it…so she came over to me one day; and she said, "I'm resigning. I am tired of fighting the subtle things;" and she said, "This one's so NOT subtle that I'm just resigning. I'm not going to be in a building where I'm isolated from my department…even though it's temporary…they can see I'm pregnant." I mean, you could tell. It wasn't a secret; all of a sudden there comes a strong need to get to the bathroom all the time. And she said, "Where I have to go out in the snow; and I can't easily get there between some of my classes."  And I said, "Lord, don't resign. I'm going to move you."  And she said, "Well, where are you going to move me to?" "I'm going to send George, the department head, over there [where she was located]."…she resigned anyway at the end of the year, and then I didn't give them the position back…. I didn't give the department the position back. She resigned, and they told me to fill the position; and I said, "No." But it was an equity hire position; she had left. They didn't yet know how to handle it. Tell you what; they nearly ran me out of town.

Skepticism and resistance can be expressed through other means as well. Methods used to resist or to challenge women leaders can be implicit as with negative attitudes, undermining, spreading rumors, teasing, disobliging, using delay tactics, not getting things done, and as explicit as criticism, resentment, overstepping boundaries, open confrontation, protest, personal attacks, or even media attacks. After observing and analyzing the various ways her male and female direct reports employed to resist her, Betty found that her male direct reports tested how far she would go by challenging her authority through open confrontations or disobliging while her female direct reports or staff often spread rumors, criticized her actions, or used delay tactics.

> My observation with male direct reports is that they will challenge you within the first three months of the report. In some way they will challenge your authority. They'll disagree with you openly, and then they won't follow through if you say, you know, "We're going to do this or that;" and they disagree. They'll undermine or…and it's been funny because I've really seen that. And my own experience is…once you cut it off, they respect you; and then they are totally on your side. It's like with men there's this sort of authority thing that they're much more respectful of the hierarchy whereas women will just undermine you, like a little pernicious kind of weed. And they won't directly confront you, but what they'll do is they'll do all these little things. You know, they'll be back talking or there'll be discussions or the rumors or…. They won't get things done on time, and they'll kind of subvert you. But it won't be; it's indirect. It's completely indirect…. I'll never forget this: I was trying to get the director, the guy who directed parking to… They had these horrible, horrible log-jams outside the parking structures; and he kept telling me how he couldn't do anything about it, and this and that. And I remember…. I had given him a whole list of suggestions of things I thought he needed to do. And he had all these reasons for why these things just wouldn't work.

According to Alice, Betty, Diane, Emily, and Irene, female leaders are more vulnerable to criticisms and attacks than their male counterparts. Examples of words or phrases often used to criticize women's leadership ranged from "cold," "insensitive," "distant," "not warm enough," "unfeeling," "mean," "witch," "unbending," "pushy," "demanding," to "controlling." Sometimes the leadership environment became mean-spirited

based on hurtful personal confrontations or attacks from the media. Near the end of the interview, Irene could not help but voice her strong concern and disagreement with the way local media attacked women leaders in her area.

> I think President [Powell] has been the victim of sexism in the media. I think people, I think students, faculty, staff, and the media are harder on her because she's female than if she were male, and I really believe that. I think what happened is she followed this president who was tall, dark, and handsome, charismatic, and with a political, you know, get everybody everything they wanted cause he was a "yes" man. He kept everybody happy. That was part of his mode of operating. And here she comes in, hard-working [pounding table], upfront [pounding table], willing to make the tough decisions [pounding table], building consensus, had to cut [pounding table] budgets before anyone got to know her. So the media have crucified her over and over again.... I told myself I think everyone's been unfair to her because she's a woman. I think…people have been unfair to her because she's followed the charismatic man. I think the media…have been awful to her. They have just been really hard on her. And so watching that I believe in our society still, sexism is alive and well…it draws out my protective [nature] and makes me crazy because I can be anywhere in this community; and people will say, "You working for her?" I mean people will…make negative comments about her. They don't know her from if; but the way she gets portrayed, I believe is PATENTLY unfair. And I think in part it's because of being a woman. I think the other part is she inherited a mess, and thus had to deal with a lot of tough issues. And I think the other part is her personality. She is not the charismatic dynamo that he was. That doesn't mean she's not a good person and really working hard doing good things for the institution, you know? So I do think sexism is employed…. I can't be naïve enough to think if the media are doing that to her, that there are some ripple effects in terms of my being a female in a leadership role. I wonder if they'll be harder if the portrayal of anything I may or may not do might be different if I were a man versus my being a woman, you know? I think it's a reality even though there're lots of women leaders in our city. I just think she's followed all male presidents; and I think based on what I observed, the media have been completely different with all the male presidents than they are being with her.

Obviously, even if more women are getting into visible leadership positions in certain geographical areas, the media may still not be fully prepared to accept them.

*Political and Financial Struggles*

Unanimously, all participants affirmed that higher education is a politically charged environment. Irene admitted that when she was still young and naïve, she expressed her disinterest in political issues during a job interview, which resulted in the search committee's

concern with her ability to navigate through campus politics. When Betty first joined higher

education, she thought this environment would be much less political than her previous

profession, but that perception soon "turned out to be a big 'ha-ha' for me." Having invested

her whole career in higher education, Emily noted assertively,

> …higher education is definitely political. A lot of people said it's not. It is. We argue over small things because we don't have anything big, money wise. And we fight. It can get very personal very quickly. And…I don't know whether it's just women who take things personally, but I don't think so. I see a number of men take things personally. And people get hurt because there are some people here who are out to destroy other people, not just women…and that's sad, whether it's a combination of the economy and the union environment or what. It is a testy environment, very testy.

Of all the participants, seven had the experience of, or are still struggling with, the

"old boys' networks." Five reported problems with or among women. Seven learned early on

to protect themselves by being careful with what they say, whom they trust, and in whom

they confide. Finally, all agreed that it is harder to lead in bad times. More or less, all

informants have been affected by the poor economy at the state and institutional levels.

The first commonly experienced political struggle among the informants is the old

boys' networks. Seven of the 9 participants had experience functioning as the only woman or

as one of the few women in a male-dominated environment. In fact, even today, a couple of

them are still dealing with the issue of breaking into the old boys' clubs. When talking about

this problem, phrases that were repeated over and over ranged from "not being taken

seriously," "being invisible," "not being heard or listened to," "not being answered," being

the "token" or "the isolated woman," having ideas or credits "stolen," being "dismissed" or

not being respected, being "hesitant to speak up," being teased, being scrutinized, having "no

space for mistakes," being excluded from social activities, being unaware of "decisions that

were already made," to not being able to make a case for women and children when the facts

prove that a need exists.

> Emily's experience with the old boys' network at the cabinet level has been:
>
> Many of the decisions are made before you get to the formal decision-making table. You can tell that they are already made. Many of them are made by the men VPs. They'll come, and they'll act like they want to talk about it; but the decision has already been made. You can tell…so…the old boys' network, and it's hard for women to get in there and…. Sometimes you can jump in and start asking questions, but sometimes they won't answer…unless you are the president; and you can stop the meeting and go, "Excuse me. You are going to answer my question." It may not be answered.… If I make the point…if they let you shut them up and make the point in the cabinet, they would go, "Oh, no, no, no. No, we can't do that." And 30 minutes later, one of the men would make the point, and they would say, "That is the best idea we've ever heard."

Similarly, as the only female vice president in the cabinet, Diane was more likely to be

dismissed than to be heard. Besides doing her homework really, really well, she had to assess

the environment constantly and adjust her approach as she presented her case in the cabinet

in order to be better heard.

> …my actions were dictated unfortunately by who was seated around the table…and how other men operated around the table often dictated about how I would present an issue; how firmly I would have to present an issue; how much I had to debate an issue with an individual, and quite often.… I would be dismissed, if you will. So, but, you know, that's not unusual. That's not unusual at all…. And I found that when I was able to address those individuals with giving them a conscience about whether they wanted to dismiss me or dismiss the issue…I'm delivering the message to you that whatever this decision that we're talking about, that's been on the table, is not about me. It's about the issue. Stay with the issue. Forget that I'm delivering it. I'm delivering it because no one else did…. And sometimes individuals won't let you do that. They still are responding to me more so than the issue.

Sometimes women can have problems or issues with each other and, thus, cannot

work well together. Carol used Kanter's (1980) "A Tale of 'O,'" to exemplify how gender

politics and competition exist not just between men and women but also between women,

that is, "the good O and the bad O." The competition, joggling, and jealousy among women

tend to be more serious in organizations when there are very few women (or O's) in

leadership positions. Betty had exactly such a story to share. She remembered the story

because she got the senior leadership position a female colleague wanted; the relationship

between them became very tense.

> When I first started here, I had a lot of issues with the person who was the budget
> director, who was a black female. And she was very resentful because she perceived
> that I was making more advances and… She saw herself as somebody with enormous,
> good, great potential and who wasn't succeeding, you know, who wasn't moving as
> fast. And we had a lot of…a lot of it is, you know, "Why are YOU the boss?"
> Basically, you know, "Why are you [the boss], not me?"…. She would not get things
> done; she would do something differently than what had been requested, or she just
> wouldn't do it…. You know, this particular thing wasn't done; wasn't done on time;
> this wasn't the direction we had talked about going. She would present something
> completely different or she wouldn't present it, just a lot of really difficult kinds of
> things…. Well, I did a lot of feet to fire, sending her memos, holding her responsible.
> We had a lot of real difficult conversations and…we were at loggerheads for oh, my
> Gosh, a good year and a half…. And it just was not working…. She was very
> resentful…. It's hard not to make them personal. It is personal…frustrating. It's very
> frustrating…sometimes angry.

Given the sensitivity of the political environment, the power and position they have,

and the kind of personal vulnerability involved, most informants touched on the fact that they

do not have confidants or real friends on campus. Knowing how university executives do not

enjoy freedom of speech like faculty members, and how their words can be used against them,

Emily and Grace both stressed the importance of being careful with what you say. Emily

asserted,

> Can't talk to anybody because if you do it will be used against you. The only
> confidants you can have are people who are not on your campus…there are five
> people in the world to be trusted. You've got to know carefully who those people are.
> And they're probably not the people who work with you. You can't…if you socialize
> with them, it's dangerous, very dangerous. You can socialize, but there's a limit.
> There's an arm's length socialization because if they know too much about you, they
> will use it against you every time! There're even people…who will go to cocktail
> parties and drink ginger ale and a twist of lemon to act like they were getting
> inebriated. They are really there to extract information from those who are getting
> inebriated, and will use what they say against them in the future…they're NOT the

ones you can trust. So…the piece of it is that women are never at ease. Can never let your guard down…. You probably should find a woman at another campus, a long, long, long way away. Hopefully a woman in other occupation who'd care less what happens…you have to sort out your friends very, very, very carefully.

As Betty noted, the issue of loneliness at the top for her meant not being able to share personal concerns or burdens with the people with whom she works. Since she joined higher education, she has been very careful and protective with personal information. An expert in political science, Frances enjoyed serving as an informal confidant for her colleagues, but she has never shared personal issues. As Alice concluded, "No president should ever think he or she has friends. You don't. You're always the president. If you don't have personal friends, go out of town and find them. But everyone, everything you do as president is filtered through the power of your position."

The last yet most common concern shared by all of the informants is the continual financial restraints that have increased the difficulty of their jobs. Often, they have no choice but to make tough, negative budget-cut decisions. They talked about how money was tight; how resources are inadequate to do a good job; how faculty and staff are discouraged by the lack of support; how they, as leaders, have to find other ways to boost morale; how leaders have difficulty firing people who had done good work for the institution; how leading in bad times is difficult because you cannot buy your way through; and how leaders are negatively perceived or criticized simply because they had to release people or to cut money from various programs just to make ends meet. Irene said sadly,

> I've taken away the equivalent of 28 full-time positions…. And so we have been cut to the bone. We've done it through vacant positions, reassigning people, merging responsibilities, and eliminating support positions…. So it's been very taxing. And that has been a HUGE challenge. Leadership challenge for me is how to keep people motivated, positive, high morale, which you have to have working with students and young people who have high energy, but then they [people working for me] don't

have enough staff; they don't have enough resources to do what they're been asked to do. So that's a huge leadership challenge…and that's the one that's before me.

*Family and Personal Issues*

The multiple, continual, and heavy demands on their time as well as energy from the workplace inevitably spill over to these successful women's personal and family life. Eight of the 9 informants talked about health issues for themselves or for other women leaders they know. They admitted that as they are juggling all the balls in the air, the first ball dropped to the ground is usually their own personal health. When time is insufficient, the easiest thing to sacrifice is the time to take care of themselves. They talked about fatigue, stress, pressure, not getting enough sleep, not eating regular meals, not exercising to keep fit, not spending time to relax, or not having time to attend to health issues.

Balancing work and life is another common problem. For most of them, not letting their work take its toll on personal relationships and family life is almost impossible, particularly for those who are married with young children. As Diane noted,

> …this is my observation that because you spend so much time outside of the home going to dinners and receptions that it doesn't leave much time for building a relationship at all. Not unless you are with a person who is also as enmeshed and involved in higher education and all of its insular requirements or responsibilities who would understand the nature of the job that you're in. It's got to be a problem.

A single mother with a young child, Betty simply did not see how women could possibly balance between family and work without a very supportive spouse. As she described her struggles with balancing family and work and the many difficult choices she had to make as an executive in higher education, she seemed deeply troubled.

> I had a young family, and I found it [balancing] utterly impossible…it's really difficult as an executive, very difficult. Now, women who don't have children or who are older, their experience may be completely different…. I mean they used to tease me. I've been divorced while I have been here. One of the biggest complaints is that I never spend enough time at home, and they used to say I was married to [X

University].… It requires nine to five; it's not just nine to five—it's more than just the amount of time. It was always thinking about it.… I don't know what I would do if I had more than one [child]. I've probably been through three or four different nannies or daycare; I mean just trying to deal with childcare, with a child is impossible.… It's very difficult to maintain, particularly if you don't have a spouse who is really supportive and who understands kind of what the demands are and he's willing to take a share of the responsibility. But that wasn't my circumstance. I had a spouse who was very "needy," if you will. And, you know, there're these evening events. You never get home.… It's very hard to have a sane family life, a regular kind of, you know, you have meals together. That never happens. We do maybe breakfast on Sunday mornings and that's it…and being able to be engaged in your children's lives and involved in what they're doing and going to the soccer games and the volleyball games and showing up for things and all that stuff; it's very, very difficult.… It's a continual struggle, a continual challenge. And if you were to talk to her, she would tell you I don't do a good job of it. It's very difficult except I try to always take her to school in the morning because we have a little bit of time on the way to school. So that means then that I can't do early morning meetings; and when I do, it's a… meeting that I have to do, you know? So that impacts my professional life because there are a lot of people who do breakfast meetings, and I can't. I have to make certain choices there. So I tend to come in later, and I stay later; but then I don't see her in the evenings.

Even with spouses who understand the requirements of their jobs and provide help with various domestic responsibilities, the heavy burden their wives are carrying sometimes causes them to react negatively. An example would be what happened to Carol's husband who

…gets tired of taking messages for me. Raymond gets burdened because people don't feel they want to call me, then they'll tell him something. Raymond gets burdened because people start complaining about what I've done; and he becomes part of the brunt of it, and he gets pretty defensive. The pattern of success for women has included historically many women who didn't have spouses…so there's still not a good paradigm for a president's spouse who is male, so one of the issues you have to deal with is the kaleidoscope to date for women. It's always been something that the president's spouse just got here, okay? And so I had to go tell them that I came for the next second team [of wives] because Raymond wasn't coming, you know? You just have to sort of redefine the role and recognize that it's not personal. The house staff doesn't know how to deal with Raymond because they're used to having a wife who lived in and didn't work.

Both Alice and Emily confessed that they do not know what balancing means. Now that Alice serves as a president, she receives some support with the housework from the

university. However, she had to struggle along the way over the years without much help. In the same fashion, Emily concluded,

> …the biggest challenge for me is I cannot balance. I do not know the meaning of the word. I do not know how to do it because whatever I do, I am doing it full force…I hope that there will be more people who will pay attention to balance because if we don't, there're going to be fewer women in the administration and fewer women in leadership because not everybody is as nuts as I am. And I do believe that's why there are not as many women with children and not as many married women in senior-level positions.

<div align="center">Maintaining Focus and Political Savvy</div>

When faced with overt and covert challenges, what did the informants do? How did they maneuver around large and small, professional and personal obstacles to achieve and remain successful over the years? Which strategies worked best for them and why? Generally speaking, four behavior patterns emerged as the researcher looked into the respondents' reactions to extremely difficult situations. Depending on the circumstances and people involved, these smart, experienced, and mature women utilized strategies ranging from (a) going one-on-one, (b) forming multiple layers of support, and (c) seeing through the "muck," to (d) performing the juggling act.

<div align="center">*Going One-on-One*</div>

To survive and thrive in the profession, one of the most effective and, sometimes, required strategies to deal with adversity is standing up for oneself by going one-on-one behind closed doors with an opponent to remove roadblocks to equal treatment or to combat resistance as well as conflicts in the workplace. Obviously, the informants did not get where they are today by being quiet, soft-spoken, and submissive. They are, as Emily said, "out of the norm" because they would have been long gone or replaced if they were not tough and strong enough. After trying everything they could to make things happen, if unreasonable

resistance remained, 7 of the 9 informants said they use this somewhat confrontational, last-resort method, without hesitation.

Alice, Betty, Carol, Diane, Emily, Hope, and Irene learned quickly that equal treatment and respect has to be earned, even demanded. Alice, Emily, and Hope, for instance, use benchmarking to ensure that they are being measured equitably and submit hard evidence to document discrepancies, whenever necessary. They all have the experience of confronting those who tried to set higher standards for them, or those who tried to pay them substantially less. After working in higher education for more than 30 years, Emily knows how:

> …men do not want to pay women what they are worth. They always come in with the notion that…you're going to take the least amount available—the bottom line settlement… And the strategy is: "No! If you don't give me what I'm worth, I'm not coming."…you have to be strong enough and confident enough in yourself that…"O.K., I'm not coming. I don't need you. I don't need to go there. I will not settle, and I won't. I'd rather stay where I am than work for someone who does not value me."

To avoid being treated like a second-rate citizen, Carol learned not to make coffee for her male colleagues. She also takes notes of her ideas so that if others try to take credit for her contributions, she can reclaim them. As the token ones at the cabinet level, Carol, Diane, Emily, and Irene all have to deal with invisibility, put-downs, teasing, and even personal attacks at times. While Diane said she will fight right back if necessary, all four of them agree that a more effective strategy is going one-on-one in private, after having been "put down" or insulted in public. When they employ that strategy, their male colleagues normally feel uncomfortable and quickly apologize. Emily first talked about why she prefers a private conversation.

> I have never been a confrontational person in public because I think that turns people off and makes enemies. And you don't ever need an enemy because you never know when you're going to need their support…. My mother always said, "Don't burn bridges…because you may need to get back across that river someday." And I always

try to follow that. Now, you may assault me in public. You may call me names. You may say ugly things to me. I will not respond, but I will talk to you in private. I will go to you and I will go have it out in private; but I will not embarrass you in public. But I think that is a strategy that works very, very well…. I keep my cool as best as I can; but as soon as it is possible, I am in somebody's office; and we have our tete-a-tete. And I've had people thank me for not [acting out in public]…they apologized typically for going off the deep end.

Irene also tries not to confront others in public. She provided an example of how she

dealt with one of her senior male vice president colleagues' rudeness to her in a meeting.

I didn't like the way he spoke to me in a meeting…and there were other people in the room…. I didn't feel it was respectful. So I made an appointment with him, and I went over to his office and I told him. I said, "I need to talk to you because when you spoke to me that way, I did not feel like you were treating me with respect. And I don't want to operate that way. So we need to talk about it…. I didn't appreciate it. I care about you. I enjoy working with you. But I did not like that interaction, and I don't want to have another one like that. And I need to let you know how I feel about it."…. He apologized, and he's never done it since. So he apologized. He said, "I am so sorry." He said, "Irene, you can't take everything I said. Sometimes I, sometimes…." He has a temper, and so sometimes he just blows.

For blatant resistance, Betty, Carol, and Irene use positional power to "hold their feet

to fire," as Betty stated, to demand respect, compliance, and performance. As described

earlier, one of Betty's male direct reports resisted her by giving all kinds of excuses for not

getting things done. So Betty said to him,

"Okay, you know what? If you don't think these things can work, and you don't have any ideas for what will, then I need to find a new director of parking." You know, it's testing; it's challenging to see how far I would be willing to go. And, you know, that only happened once; and then suddenly he had all sorts of ideas…. It's so funny to me how men are really concerned about their responsibility areas.… Men are really focused on power, POWER. It's like they are really concerned about where your power crosses their power. And as long as we're clear that this is my power, this is my area of responsibility; this is yours, we can work together; we'll play together; we will work as a team, but don't try to take my stuff…. I understand the rules of the male environment…I understand the male hierarchy. I understand, you know, men tend to be focused on authority, power, and a lot with men is ego. But I know the rules of the game with men…. They're real conscious of what they have dominion over. That's real important.

As soon as Irene realized that her second-in-command had been secretly competing with her, she "hit it head on" immediately by expressing her concern to him directly. She stated,

> I have an associate vice president who is very competitive, which is interesting because I never felt like he was competitive with ME until recently…he's political in how he operates with me, and that's a challenge because you really want to have the person who's in that role be absolutely someone you can confide in and trust. He's probably a little more politically astute than I am, so it's taken me a while to figure that out…. I address…we talked about it. I am very direct [laughs]…. I don't know how to dance around things. So I am pretty direct. So I talked with him about it, and I told him how I was feeling and so he pledged to really work on that. And…he acknowledged that there has been some of that going on. And so, it's been better since I've done that.

*Forming Multiple Layers of Support*

To solve complex problems and secure feedback from people with divergent points of view, forging support networks composed of trusted colleagues at multiple levels is a very powerful strategy. Support from community leaders, professional networks, professionals outside of their universities, board members, the president, fellow executive officers, faculty members, and supporting staff cannot only help withstand attacks and resistance but will also increase leadership effectiveness and long-term success in the profession.

Alice, Diane, and Emily talked about how immense support from outside constituents had helped them succeed. Like Alice said, "I think the women and men who I know are successful presidents know how to have support networks in their communities and friends outside of their work communities." When she was under relentless media attacks for firing two football coaches, she initiated a series of breakfast meetings with local community leaders to get the truth out about her decisions. To support the first female university president ever in their male-dominated community, two women community leaders organized a big group of women from the community to back Alice up.

Had it not for three great mentors and allies she met through community involvement, Diane would never have been able to break through the glass ceiling at her institution and smoothly advance to a vice presidency. Similarly, Emily emphasized how:

> Networking is another reason that I have been successful. I know lots and lots of people, and it's really important for women and men, but particularly for women, to know people. Know people in high and low places because you need them. You need them on your way up. You also need them on your way down and back up again because you never know when you're going to be coming in and out. So you've got to be nice to everybody and thoughtful to everybody because they will be able to help you somewhere alone the line. Not insincerely nice, but networking is critical…and higher education is a small industry. Even though it looks like it's big, it's not. It's a very closed community. And you just don't realize how information travels in the small industry. So it's very nice to be able to pick up the telephone and call and say, "Could you find out about this? Could you find out about that? Would you do this for me?" And that doesn't have to do with yourself and so…again, the ACE [American Council on Education] Network has just been invaluable for me. So every woman needs a strong network, and that has been quite nice for me.

Due to the sensitivity and vulnerability involved in making close friends in the workplace, most of the informants prefer seeking counsel from outside constituents like other women presidents, vice presidents, senior administrators they befriend through professional networking, or from their friends at other universities or in other professions. Moreover, Carol, Frances, Grace, and Irene are fortunate enough to have the most secure and personal confidants and counsel—their husbands who are equally involved in the profession and, thus, can provide great advice to them.

All informants agree that without support from the person-in-charge, they would not have been able to function effectively as leaders. Consequently, combating skepticism and resistance would have been a lot more difficult. Emily knows clearly that had the president at one of her previous institutions not refuted the two male vice presidents' challenge of her leadership, she would not have been able to maintain her authority to carry out her duties effectively. Similarly, even though criticism and resistance toward her leadership existed

initially, Betty succeeded anyway because of strong support from the president. She believed that:

> A lot of my own success within this organization, given my role has been having a very supportive president. And in part it's because I don't compete with him. I know who the president is. I don't have a big need to kind of be out in front all the time…if we were making a movie, I would much rather be the director than to be the actor. I don't need to be the one who's out there all the time, whose name's in lights…. I want to be appreciated and thanked, but I don't need to be the person that's out there. I really don't…. One of the things that is absolutely critical is that you really have to have the support of the leadership. And how a woman cultivates that [support] is critical. And I think one of the best ways to cultivate that kind of confidence is by doing a good job…is by success.

Building formal and informal support groups, allies, and advocates among colleagues is another effective strategy that can be used in a variety of ways. The many strategic support networks that Alice, Diane, Emily, and Irene forged at different points in time helped them advance from mid-level to top-level leadership position; withstand resistance from the old boys' network; secure resources to accomplish their goals; and gain sufficient institutional knowledge as well as skills to navigate through campus politics, respectively.

To break into the old boys' network at the cabinet level, Diane spent a lot of time and effort building relationships with her fellow male vice presidents so that when she was attacked in meetings, she did not have to stand up for herself all the time. Her strategy worked because after developing personal relationships with her male colleagues, some of them began to defend her at times. As for Emily, her creativity in forming alliances and advocates helped her obtain resources to turn various impossible missions into reality time after time. She provided an example of how she collaborated successfully with a colleague to exchange services and make everybody happy. Her strategy was:

> I looked around, and I thought, "Who's got money? Who's got money? With whom can I strike an alliance? Where can I do something?" And I was one of the first persons who started making deals with [an interdisciplinary program]. And I went

over to Jack Morrison, who was the Dean at that time. I said, "Jack, I need some help and I know you do. So if I do this, will you do all of my reproduction—my copying? Will you pay memberships for my faculty in professional organizations if I guarantee you this—in terms of numbers of courses I would offer?" He said, "Yes.".... And I got flexibility and much needed money. I think I generated three times my operating budget by just working with him. So I guaranteed him something, and he guaranteed me something.... He was getting what he needed.... And I was getting my copying done.... Everybody was happy.

Depending on their work and responsibilities, some informants emphasize collegiality and cooperation from the faculty while others stress the importance of high quality performance as well as support from staff. Strategies that work best for the informants are being transparent, sharing information to build communities, leading by example, listening, being flexible enough to make necessary adaptations, and involving others during the process to pull them on board. Information sharing and participatory leadership practices during the decision-making process, according to 8 of the 9 informants, proved to be very effective ways to form consensus to make things happen. What Irene did was:

...engage others in the conversation so that you build the team of support...make sure that you have the people who are the experts in whatever the area is, the doers, the worker bees as part of the decision-making process. I think there's nothing more frustrating for people who are on the front lines if people in the VP roles and president roles are off there making decisions and telling THEM what they're supposed to do without having THEM say these are the issues; these are the realities; and have us work with them to come up with solutions together. So I work hard to do this.... My sense is people had been very appreciated for the fact that I'm open. They really have been very appreciative that I give them a wealth of information.

Like Carol said, "When you have to use positional power often, you're not a very good leader." Consequently, positional power is only occasionally used among the informants. Actually, given the fact that many women do not respond well to the hierarchy of authority, positional power sometimes does not work, particularly when used by women, according to Betty. Therefore, she works on building connections with her support team and finds that it works pretty well.

*Seeing through the "Muck"*

As Alice, Betty, Carol, Diane, Emily, and Irene reflected on some of the unpleasant experiences they had, they confessed that they would be lying if they said that no tense, unpleasant, hurtful, or even painful feelings were ever involved. In fact, with or without obstacles, all nine informants emphasized the importance of emotional intelligence, humor, thick skin, not taking oneself too seriously, letting go of negativity, not holding grudges, having the maturity to pick your battles, thinking positively, tenacity, looking through the "muck," and putting things in perspective to stay focused on what must be accomplished.

Accepting adversity as reality, according to Carol, is the first counteracting step.

> …because part of the battle is recognizing it's happening…no one assured us that there would be an even and fair playing field in life. I don't see that stuff ever written anywhere…. I think you have to just recognize that there are points in which life is unfair. And you can lament the fact that life is unfair; we all do that; but it can't have a power over you because life is unfair…let me try to use an analogy…. As you're playing golf, and in golf you can hit a really good shot; and it can take a terrible bounce and could put you in a really bad spot. And sometimes you hit a really bad shot; and it takes a really good bounce, and it goes into a good spot…it's just what happens in the course of life. And on the golf course, you'd call it luck…. You can call it fate. You can call it just the way things are…if you recognize that that's true, then your power comes from not putting labels on it and trying to replay that shot. It comes from the capacity to focus and make the very best next shot…you can whine about the things that are not fixable or unfair, but they can't dominate your life. You just have to go on…. Figure out what's fixable and which things are just because life's unfair or work on the things that are fixable.

Similarly, Hope commented, "you have to decide if you're going to let other people run your life, or you're going to run your life. And at some point I decided that I was going to be a productive person." Instead of spending a lot of time on personality issues, Frances' strategy is focusing on what has to be done because "Even if they don't like you personally, how do they argue with success? Well, they can't. So, that's fine. You don't have to like me. No requirement [laughs]."

Other informants also stressed the need to ignore negative comments, not to take oneself too seriously, and not to hold grudges to avoid being weighed down and becoming immobilized. In particular, Betty spoke highly of the importance of emotional intelligence and humor for leaders in higher education. She explained,

> …you've got to be able to see through all of the muck to what really needs to happen and not let a lot of things distract you. Because there're always going to be distractions; there're always going to be naysayers; and it really is kind of holding to a conviction. And it's so easy to get weighed down and stopped by negativity, criticism. And people won't stop. And it really is the ability to not let that hold you back and to continue, particularly when you've got a lot of people whether it's political kinds of issues or personalities. Or, this one's upset because he or she didn't get adequate credit for that and…. You know, you've got to be able to kind of see through all of that. It's really important…. It's what they call "emotional intelligence." It's getting control of the ego – of one's own ego…. I've seen people who were both smart people and had wonderful ideas, but they couldn't.… They weren't successful because they couldn't work with other people. They always have to have their way. And I think that you don't always get your way; you have to pick your battles, pick the things that are very important; and you have to know how to be persuasive. I think that also just a positive attitude and a sense of humor are very, very important – sense of humor especially because I think within an academic environment people tend to take things so seriously. So it's better to use humor to sort of break the ice to know when…. You know I think that's a part of…kind of maturity is to know what battles to pick; to know how to work as a part of a team; not to have to take credit for everything. People know in an organization and a team, and they hate it when other people take credit for people. So, I think it's humility, but it's also giving credit where credit's due.

She then talked about how humor can be developed and used.

> [You've got to have a] sense of ease with people. Humor can be a wonderful tension reducer… it's a great tension reliever. There's a whole theory about laughter…. There have been a lot of studies and data. Humor has a cathartic effect, really; it's called a discharge. There are certain discharges – humor, laughter, crying, yawning…. There're certain human expressions that enable an emotional discharge of energy; and the purpose of this theory is to get people to discharge because by discharging you release, and you're more able to relax and see things clearly; you're not trapped by your anger, by all the emotion. And in these sessions what you do is you get people to discharge and laugh, that's why laughter is a stress reliever…humor is a way we deal with highly intense, emotional situations; and it's a way to relieve the tension. So to use humor is actually very strategic because it gets people to release tension and when they laugh, they are more relaxed and then able to see more clearly. So humor actually can be used very strategically and very effectively…it's making light of a

situation…. When people are really at each other's throats, or people are really tense, you can just go, "This is going really well." That's using irony as humor…. It's using humor strategically.

Because of their optimistic and tenacious nature, obstacles and challenges to these women leaders can be viewed as opportunities for improvement and progress. These mature and smart women seldom waste a lot of time fretting. Rather, they put things into perspective so they can see the big picture and keep steering their institutions in the right direction.

<p align="center">*Performing the Juggling Act*</p>

With or without a family, and with or without children, all informants agree that keeping a healthy and balanced life is the biggest challenge for them at the personal level. Almost all of the women leaders contend that it is impossible to work as a university executive and maintain a sane personal and/or family life at the same time without strategies to make the multiple responsibilities possible. Therefore, they generously shared strategies they use to make bearing multiple domestic responsibilities and handling personal needs possible.

When dealing with the issue of balancing work and family, Betty and Frances rely on multi-tasking and time management. Like Frances said, the balancing act is never easy.

> …it's a bit challenging, but I am a relentless multi-tasker…. I make lists. I try and create sort of…the way that I can organize a specific block of time with the next specific period of time to get certain things done at the domestic front that then give me more freedom to do things with my husband or with other members of my family…and…. It is time management for me. It's all about time management. For Saturday morning, as much as anything [clears throat], I have in my mind: this is my path; this is the route I will take to accomplish it. I do not want to double back, so I am purposeful in creating this much work during this much time to get what I need to accomplish. Because for me, there's a part of getting that done that directly impacts my productivity in other activities. So, then I'm hitting work on Monday morning after a productive weekend. I got things done that I needed to…planning; and it was all very much, you know, very organized for me to do it that way because I don't know how to do it in another way.

Saving time from cooking and housekeeping is another way to make long working days possible. Most of them do not cook. Not having time is one reason; having to attend one-after-another dinner event is another. With other housework, some negotiate for help from the university; some request help from their spouses; and others simply lower the standards and admit that they do not have a clean house.

For other family-related issues, such as childcare, elderly care, and relationships with spouses, some depend on university facilities; some hire help; some rely on support from spouses; and some schedule time to maintain their relationships with their significant others. Diane, for instance, utilized the childcare program on campus and planned family outings including her husband to interesting university events as well as activities. Others hired nannies, educators, and taxi drivers to take care of their children's needs. As to elderly care, had Alice's husband not decided to retire early to take care of their aging parents, she would probably have had to struggle with this issue like Betty and Emily did.

In terms of maintaining personal relationships with significant others, taking time to be with them is the most important strategy. While some of the currently married informants enjoy sharing their work and seeking counsel from their husbands, others spend time taking yoga lessons or going out of town to relax with their husbands. In handling personal needs, some informants stress the need to take time off and leave their worries as well as concerns about their work completely so they can relax and refresh themselves. Some try to squeeze small, self-indulging activities into their crazy schedules to release the tension and to reward themselves. Some use their internal sense of achievement to keep them going while others emphasize the importance of spiritual support such as faith, prayers, and meditation as their ultimate source of motivation.

Numbers Matter: The Rules Change

One of the most significant themes that emerged from this study is related to how the number/percentage of women on the executive team can affect women's leadership experiences and the management culture at an institution of higher learning. Without the researcher even asking, 8 of the 9 informants attributed part of their negative leadership experiences to their status as the only or one of the few "token" women in the executive leadership team. They talked about how the increase of women in powerful positions will create or has already created a more receptive climate for women leaders. Whether predicting the differences that numbers can make or sharing their first-hand experiences, their accounts all indicated that as the cabinet becomes more diversified, more voices are readily heard, more worldviews are shared, more diverse ways of doing things are considered, and more talents are embraced for the greater good of the institution.

As will be discussed later in Chapter Six, Kanter (1993) proposed that women as tokens (the only one or fewer than 15% of the group) in leadership have a hard time changing the management culture. She added that once women reach a critical mass (more than 35%), the chance for them to use collaboration to increase their influence on the management culture increases. The best situation exists when women compose 40% to 60% of the leadership team and become a social group equal to men.

Rarely has the phenomenon of female cabinet executives becoming the critical mass or an equal social group in American colleges and universities been considered or addressed. The researcher found that 5 of the 9 informants in this study have witnessed women becoming an even social group in executive teams. Alice, Frances, Grace, Hope, and Irene all serve on gender-balanced cabinets. Hence, as they talked about women's current status in the

academy, they sounded positive, indicating their belief that time has changed for women; as

Alice said, "there are enough of us in leadership positions now…. We're not such a shock."

All five of them agree that when women and men exist in about equal numbers as

president or vice presidents on the cabinet, gender becomes invisible as an issue; the focus of

the communication naturally turns to effective collaboration and teamwork among everyone

involved. Irene, for instance, talked about how she was "hesitant to speak up" in a male-

dominated cabinet; but "the dynamics changed" when the first woman president took office.

> When she [the first female chancellor] first started, all of a sudden, around the table, there were more women than men. And they [male vice chancellors] all joked about [it]. They were all like, oh, my gosh. They were a little uncomfortable because they were used to having more of the old boys' club. And so all of a sudden, that was like, okay, the rules have changed. Now what do I do?…. You could visibly see they were like, okay, the rules have changed; now I'm not quite sure what I'm supposed to do because it's not the rule I'm always familiar with. And I think the rules were "private deals behind closed doors" kind of thing.

With the new female president, important decisions were made collaboratively, so Irene felt

well included as part of the decision-making team. Whenever complex problems came up,

> …we're all around the table, and she will get our input; and then she will make tough decisions, and she will take the hit. But she doesn't make those decisions without consulting widely and broadly and with the appropriate people…so she's making decisions based on really very good information; but in the process to do that, she builds support for whatever decisions she made…even if she makes a decision different [from what you would like to see], you feel like you've been included. And so you're willing to support her, whatever decisions she makes. So I love working for her…. I mean, we are all in it together. That is not the feelings that I have typically had when there was a man at the helm.

For Frances and Grace, the transition from male-dominated to gender-balanced or

female-dominated cabinets at their institutions was less dramatic because their institutions

embraced women's talents earlier. According to Frances, three male presidents and interim

presidents gradually opened the door to leadership positions for women and minorities. Now

that the institution has its first female president, the hospitable climate for all has been even

further secured. She remembered that, at her current institution, at one time,

> …fully half of the executive leadership team was women…when you have reached a critical mass of women, then you're not…thinking, "Well, see if I say something, they'll just ignore me because they are all men…. Now, you've got five or six women's voices. Can't really ignore six people, right? So the more you create the critical mass, the less sort of singled out you might feel, or less intimidated you might feel. I mean, today in a lot of discussions, people would say something. I don't care whether it's male or whatever, and if I disagree, I just say, "You know, I whole-heartedly disagree with you." Now, if you're in a, if you're one woman in a sort of a team of men, it's a little tougher to say, "I whole-heartedly disagree with you."…but if there are 5 of us around, that makes a whole lot of difference…there's equal opportunity, exclusion, teasing for men and for women.

Nonetheless, this "shifting of the fence," Irene's description meaning more women in

leadership roles, is not only recent but also limited to certain areas and institutions. Like

Frances said, "There are plenty of other places…in higher education where that ground was

not softened, and still is sort of rock hard."

As the first female presidents in their institutions, both Alice and Carol set their own

rules. However, before they had enough positional power to "change the rules," they had to

play by the rules set by their male predecessors and colleagues as well. According to Alice,

"When you're the only woman, whether you are the team leader or a member of the team,

you feel the difference." Therefore, when given the chance to build a senior leadership team,

she made sure that every aspect was properly balanced, including expertise, talents, and

gender.

> …when I had my senior leadership team which is the group below the cabinet and I look around it's probably 40% to 60%. You know, 40% women. But that's a high number around the table, so we've done very well.

Carol, Diane, and Emily are three women leaders who have always been the "token"

women on their president's cabinets. Not having much choice, they all learned quickly to

accept and deal with the "dynamics of numbers" by complying with the rules of the games established by their male counterparts, even if the bar were suddenly raised for them because they were women. Furthermore, they carried the extra burden of having to outperform consistently, not just for themselves, but also for other women. Carol, for instance, talked about how the title of "the first female president" put an additional responsibility on her because she knew her performance could affect how others see women as leaders. How does it feel to be the token one in leadership? As noted by Emily,

> Other people can skate by. They can go in unprepared. I can't. Because the very time I tried to skate would be the time that I'd get caught with it and…that would be when they [the men] would say, "See? See? They (they being women) really don't know what they are doing." So I have to be prepared for every meeting. I have to be…twice as prepared as anybody else in the room. So I'm going to make a presentation? It has to be twice as good. I have to dazzle people, and I can't ever NOT dazzle them. I can't ever have a down day. And some people would say that that's silly. No, it's not silly because I am under the microscope 24 hours a day…it's not only that I am under the microscope, but it's that women who would follow me are also under the microscope. If I screw up, it's going to be twice as hard for the next woman who comes in because people will remember what I did and hold it against the next woman who comes in. Or, there may not be a next woman who comes in; but they don't remember that about men. Men screw up all the time because there are more of them…and nobody remembers or cares; but if the isolated woman makes an error, people remember.

Reflecting on the many struggles she went through over the years as the only female vice president in the cabinet, Diane believes that the solution resides in the number of women in powerful leadership positions at her institution. Although Diane has no idea how long it will take for her institution to embrace women as executives, she dreams of an ideal status (i.e., of a "balanced" society).

> If we had a balance in our society, I would suggest that there would be equal questioning, equal requesting. The equity would be balanced out so that you wouldn't need to ask me that question, that it would be an equal playing ground that when I asked a male…from a female asking a male about "Why are you proposing this?" There's not a problem. Or that a male asking me as a female, "Why are you proposing this?" And I provide an answer…and nothing jumps out as "It's because she's a

woman," or vice versa. I wouldn't say that, "Well, it's because he's a man." If, in fact, we had a balance, and quite frankly, that's going to just take numbers, I think, you know? And the infusion of more women around the table and seeing a different way of looking at issues, a different way of answering issues, proposing resolutions that…eventually it will become so balanced, so usual, and so not so unusual, that you just kind of this is the way we're operating today. And it's not about whether you're male or female. These are the right ways to approach these issues to get the best resolutions.

Indeed, as more voices are heard, more ideas are accepted, and more talents are recognized and utilized in the leadership team, the institution as a whole will benefit the most from it. Although Carol and Diane did not have any experience working within a gender-balanced cabinet, they predict that as more and more women join the executive teams at their institutions, things will get better for women. Yet only time will tell when their prediction will become a reality at their institutions.

<div align="center">Gender as a Two-Edged Sword</div>

To determine if gender as a factor made any difference in the participants' careers and personal lives, all informants were invited to comment on their perceptions of the role(s) gender played in their experiences. While 6 of the 9 participants believed that at different points in time, gender played both positive or negative roles in their careers, eight of them, particularly those who were married with children, argued that no matter what people say, most of the domestic responsibilities still fall on women's shoulders, creating more personal struggles and more difficult choices for women than for men.

Gender has its positive impacts in different ways. For Alice, Betty, Diane, Grace, Frances, and Irene, the many skills, instincts, diversified worldviews, and strengths that women possess not only enrich their own leadership experiences but also create benefits for their institutions. For Diane and Emily, gender was positive in terms of "getting opportunities." Had it not been for the mandate of affirmative action, women probably would

not have been able to move into positions as the "first" woman president, vice president, dean, director, department head, or faculty member as smoothly. Frances testified how gender can benefit women:

> …if institutions are intent on living the commitment to diversity and living the commitment to a welcoming environment no matter what level that environment is being constructed, whether it's for the students, whether it's for the faculty and staff, whether it's for the alumni, and other constituencies…. IF they are committed to living it, then the advantage obviously of creating opportunities and recognizing the benefits of putting people IN positions where that is visible should be an advantage.

Gender may help some women leaders get into management. However, just being a woman certainly does not assist a woman as she attempts to move into predominantly male senior leadership teams, migrate into even higher positions, or remain in powerful executive-level positions that have been historically occupied by men at their institutions. When asked how life would be different had they been men, 7 of the 9 women leaders affirmed that they believed, at both the professional and the personal levels, life would have been easier.

On the professional level, Diane, Emily, and Irene believe that as members of the senior leadership team, had they been men, they would have been taken more seriously, their voices would have been heard more clearly, their expertise and competence would have been questioned fewer times, and they would have been less vulnerable to negative perceptions and attitudes. The contradictory expectations for them to be strong, effective, decisive leaders as well as nice, warm, friendly women at the same time have also created "workplace balance" troubles for some women leaders.

Like Grace said, "You don't survive if you're just being nice." However, as women work forcefully and effectively to make things happen, what responses do they tend to get? Are they described as being progressive, decisive, clear-headed, and non-emotional or as pushy, demanding, insensitive, distant, inhospitable, and cold? Unfortunately, Betty, Diane,

Emily, and Irene's experiences and their observations of other women leaders in the profession over the years led them to believe that female leaders today are still more vulnerable to overt and covert resistance than their male counterparts. Seeing how some of her male and female direct reports have challenged her leadership both implicitly and explicitly, Betty concluded by saying that had she been a man, "I wouldn't get any of the criticism, and I would not get half of the resistance that I get."

How would life be different had they been a career man instead of a career woman? Interestingly, Alice, Betty, Diane, Emily, Frances, Grace, and Irene believe that they would probably have had a wife taking care of their children at home, like most of their male counterparts do. Life would have been easier had they been men because they would not have to multi-task and struggle so much trying to balance among their work, family, and personal life. Spending most of their time fulfilling their responsibilities as senior executives would not have seemed so wrong, nor would their focus on work have led to Betty's, Diane's, and Emily's divorces as well as deep-seated guilty feelings when they could not attend their children's events or special occasions. When asked how she would feel had she been a man and how gender had affected her experience as an individual as well as a professional, Betty stated assertively,

> I'd have this person completely in my corner for me achieving my success, you
> know? I'd have a…. What do you call it? A cheerleading section, you know? In other
> words, if I were a man, I would have a wife who would be taking…whose
> responsibility would be to get my kids to school and do all of that and who would be
> devoted to my success…. I mean…. I look at my colleagues. Their spouses are
> devoted to their success. They are supporters of their success…. I guess I have
> learned that I think women struggle in different ways with being good leaders; that I
> think the common bond is that we all have to deal with this work/life stuff. The other
> piece is we all have to deal with…when do you put yourself first versus your
> occupation.… If I look at some of the deans here, women who are in senior positions
> and, you know, it's things like compromising your health and at what point is enough,
> enough? So it's trying to find the balance between your professional life and your

personal, family – and personal as in taking care of yourself and family that I just don't think that men have to deal with. I just don't. Now maybe I'm wrong; maybe men do. But I just think that men are much more able to be focused on themselves than women are. Women have to multi-task. You know; you've got to be able to do 20 different things at the same time, whereas men get to focus on themselves.

Fortunately, neither Alice, Carol, Frances, nor Irene had to choose between marriage and career. Having a supportive spouse plus the fact that they did not have to play the "mother role" made the challenge of balancing between work and life a little bit easier. However, while Alice and Carol did not seem to be bothered by being childless, both Frances and Irene wished they had not missed their opportunity to have children.

<center>Competing as a Woman: Prepared and Ready</center>

Near the end of each interview, each respondent was invited to share her insights about women leaders in higher education and to offer some advice for aspiring women leaders. Based on their own experience as well as their observation of other women leaders in the academy, these successful women talked about leadership preparation as well as the strengths and the pitfalls for aspiring women leaders. The purpose of preserving their words of wisdom is to inspire and support all who want to pursue to a successful leadership career in the academy.

When sharing their views about women leaders, all participants agreed that women have great talents and can be strong, powerful leaders. They got to where they are now because they have much to offer. In fact, they can offer more if they make good use of both masculine and feminine traits. A number of veteran administrators, like Alice, Diane, Emily, Frances, Grace, and Hope recognize the fact that part of their success was built upon their skills and abilities to listen, care, nurture, connect, communicate, and collaborate. Younger executives like Betty and Irene also believe that the capacity to combine the best of both

male and female traits can be a great asset for women leaders. Irene, for instance, shared how being good at working with both men and women helped her.

> …because I'm a coach's daughter, I have a clear understanding of men and male athletes and the male mindset, and…I'm very relationship-oriented and have a real love of people. So the combination, I think, has helped me to be effective with both men and women.

Since higher education administration has been and is still primarily male-dominated, women often have no choice but to gain their leadership skills by observing their male supervisors. In many cases, being tough and following male leadership models have, indeed, become women's tickets to executive posts because women leaders cannot afford to be perceived as "weak" or "soft." Nevertheless, knowing how leading like a man can bring more trouble than benefit to women leaders, Betty, Frances, and Irene urged women to adapt their leadership style by integrating both masculine and feminine strengths once they assume leadership posts. Irene explained why women leaders should make good use of their positive feminine traits and strengths instead of simply ignoring them.

> I don't think women should fall into the trap of trying to model general typical male behavior when they're IN those leadership roles. I think the strength we have as women is effective STRENGTH for leadership roles…. I think some women do that when they have learned and studied men that they think, you know, the authoritarian model. And they get up there, and they attempt to lead in that way; and it's not effective at all. And it alienates; and if anything, it makes a woman really angry because you can. There's a posturing or something. It doesn't; it's not a good thing.

When asked what she thinks is important for aspiring leaders, Alice stated,

> The first thing is confidence in whatever field you're in. Then I think you have to have a degree of confidence that you CAN do it, and then you have to have a consciousness of self: what your own strengths and weaknesses are. And you have to use, draw from your strengths, and work on your weaknesses. And part of it is being open enough to build a team that complements whatever your weakness is…. Get professionally busy; go to workshops; go to the Institute for Leadership Development; present papers at conferences; get out there; network. No one's going to come knock on your door and discover you.

Irene addressed the issue of preparation for future leaders from another perspective. She

advised those who are interested in senior leadership positions to:

> …build breadth and depth in your resume…having…not only a broad range but also some depth at each of those experiences…so you are known as an expert on whatever topic it is that you choose to be an expert on. So that people look at you and come to you for your expertise on X, Y, Z. So you have done your homework, whether it's assessment, whether it's legal issues…whatever it is. But you have got a really solid base of expertise; plus then you have these interpersonal skills, the negotiation skills, the budgeting skills. And…probably fundraising skills are critical in this state and age because of dwindled resources; you need to know how to go out and generate resources for your people.

A veteran president and an experienced fundraiser, Alice was very successful with

fundraising. What worked best for her was:

> Bringing to life for the donor the difference the donation can make to a student. So you try to tell the story. Always focus on…. I mean, the reason why we are here is students. I mean we all like to think that we're here because of whatever we do, but we're here because of students. And, so whatever you're asking money for, tie it to how it benefits the student. For example, if you're talking to an alum, how it enhances the value of their degree by improving the University and the lives of future students…it's the student that really sells because…. You could put a real face on students. I mean, you can talk about Sally who came from [Columbus]…you can do pictures of them.

Other informants stressed the importance of equipping oneself with various leadership skills

as well. Emily, for instance, first explained why aspiring leaders must expand their capacity

in financial management, particularly if they do not have proper preparation in this area, and

then introduced a very good professional development program.

> You have to be good in finance…budgeting…you need to understand the auditing, the investing, everything that comes out of the board of trustee's meeting…if you don't, the vice president for finance will take advantage of you…you can't let anybody be able to fool you…you may not know the details, but you've got to have ideas to work on them and be able to call somebody on something. "What are you doing with this money? Why are you moving this money here or there?" because that's where people get in trouble. That's where all kind of embezzling and criminal misconduct occurs. And it doesn't matter if you are ignorant. If you're the senior administrator with budgetary authority, you're the one…. I took…a course offered by NACUBO…National Association of College and University Business Officials…. It

was like a three-day course, and it teaches people who have not had finance courses how to quickly get up to speed on higher education financial reporting and concepts…they've got a wonderful website—nacubo.org., and have a great magazine called the *Business Officer*.

For women to gain equity in pay and institutional support, self-confidence and solid negotiation skills prove to be the most critical. Diane explained how negotiation could be used at "all levels," such as:

> …negotiating workload, negotiating with budgets, negotiating for salary, negotiating for personal time…. I think negotiation skills are critical, and negotiation skills can be used just about everywhere. I mean, it's not just for your own personal gain, but it's about…negotiating to get the type of collaboration you might need from somebody else…and in those negotiation skills you've got to be able to determine what's in it for them, the whoever it is that you're negotiating with…not just what's in it for you.

Whether for equity in salary, support, or collaborative opportunities, negotiation is a skill that women must acquire if they are to succeed in the long run.

Knowing how men often "delegate" work to women who perform the tasks but do not get any credit in return, Diane warned women not to "get dumped on." Since the result of expecting to be treated as a second-rate citizen is being treated like one, Hope reminded women to do the opposite and demand equal treatment in every aspect. She stressed that staying in a position for too long is also not a good thing because

> If you stay in a job too long, stay as an associate dean for 12 years, you're never going anywhere, not as a female. You should, after four or five years, go and talk to the dean and say, "Do you think that I have learned enough? What are my strengths and weaknesses? Could I be a dean? And if so, where?" And then your dean, your supervisor, whatever it is, your associate vice president, could say, "Well, I think you have to work on this and this," or "I think you're ready. If you're ready to move on, I'd like to be a reference for you. What are you thinking of doing?" You need to have somebody who's not necessarily a mentor but who can coach you, who can help you move ahead. And I think if you wait too long in jobs, then you're pegged.

Finally, Alice pointed out that although women are making impressive progress in leadership posts, she was afraid that:

…our young women will begin to think that they don't have to pay attention; that they'll just come their way; that there is no real discrimination. And then they'll wake up one day and be shocked. They won't know how to cope with the negativity when it comes.

Therefore, she reminded women not to take things for granted. Instead, they should "be diligent, to pay attention, not to take things for granted. To watch for things such as the affirmative action proposal that one day could take away some of the things we've earned."

Through continual comparison of the nine individual success stories, similarities and disparities between the informants' experiences and observations were drawn and presented in this chapter to form a holistic view of significant elements that composed the phenomenon under study. After the nine voices were joined together, a picture of what it takes for women to survive and succeed in the traditionally male-dominated profession of higher education administration came into sight clearly and powerfully.

Research findings presented in Chapters Four and Five not only echoed the content of previous works but also shed new light on the knowledge base about senior women leaders in higher education, particularly on the effect of the gender composition of the executive team on women leaders' lived experiences. The most relevant theory that can be used to explain key findings drawn from this study is Kanter's (1993) theory of tokenism versus a balanced work group. Further discussion of major conclusions drawn from this research endeavor and how they compare with relevant literature will be presented in Chapter Six. Particular emphasis will be placed on how some of the key findings support as well as extend Kanter's theory (1993) about tokenism and the impact of gender proportion on management culture and executive women's leadership experiences.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For more than 220 of the 370-year history of American higher education, the involvement and contributions of women were excluded (Chliwniak, 1997; Nidiffer, 2001a; Rudolph, 1968). After joining the system as "newcomers" about 150 years ago, women have outnumbered men as higher education's major clientele for more than 25 years (Chliwniak, 1997; Nidiffer, 2001a; U.S. Department of Education, 2002) and earned 46% of all doctorates granted in the U.S. in 2001-2002 (U. S. Department of Education, 2004). Yet their status as the underrepresented majority at the highest and most prestigious levels of the academy remains unchanged, particularly at the rank of full professor and in the key leadership position of university president (ACE, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2003b).

Instead of trying to determine why so few women have become senior leaders in the academy, this researcher chose to study why and how some women have secured and remained in powerful positions in the historically male-dominated profession of higher education administration. Chapter Four focuses on each of this study's nine informants' personal success stories, whereas Chapter Five aims at capturing common themes and patterns that emerged across cases. In this final chapter, the researcher will first present a brief summary of the dissertation. Conclusions and discussion of major findings with a discourse integrating relevant literature will follow. Special emphasis will be placed on findings that shed new light on the knowledge base about senior women leaders in American higher education. The last section of the chapter contains recommendations for action and further study.

Summary

To investigate what it takes for women to succeed as presidents, vice presidents, or other senior executive officers in public four-year institutions of higher education in the United States, a phenomenological qualitative research study was conducted using semi-structured, open-ended interview questions listed in Appendix III, page 237. Based on suggestions from "insiders" in the field, 12 cabinet-level, senior women leaders were selected and invited to participate in the research effort. After being encouraged by a state women's affiliate network associated with the American Council on Education, 9 of the 12 senior women leaders agreed to participate in the study. Of the nine participants, two served as presidents, six as vice presidents, and one as a senior executive in their universities, all with remarkable leadership experiences and achievements. The nine personal interviews took place in locations chosen by the informants. To ensure the credibility and validity of the findings, the technique of triangulation was used.

After extensive and intensive analysis, six major themes and 12 sub-themes resulted from the current study. The first prevailing theme, effective leadership strategies: earning your place at the table, focused on how and why the participants established themselves as effective and successful leaders in higher education. The first and most commonly used strategy for career success was proving oneself to be the best possible candidate for a leadership position. In other words, the informants gained their visibility, reputation, and leading roles by achieving results that nobody could ignore or deny. The second most important element of success, as highlighted by most of the informants, was interpersonal skills. With mutual trust and respect as well as good relationships with people at work, goals were achieved much more efficiently and effectively. Third, being true to oneself and doing

the right things for both the institution and oneself served as a lighthouse that helped them navigate through difficult choices and decisions. Finally, help from powerful, good, strong mentors as well as self-learning and improvement were two other critical reasons behind the participants' career success over the years.

The second major theme, tests and trials, depicted common challenges and struggles reported by the informants. The first common problem among the nine senior women leaders was barriers to equal treatment in the workplace, such as lower pay, stricter scrutiny, and fewer advancement opportunities into key leadership positions. The second issue was the subtle skepticism of their competence and resistance to their leadership or authority. Campus politics and budget cuts formed another shared challenge among the informants. The last yet universal problem reported by all participants was the difficulty of juggling all of the balls in the air without dropping any one of them, including personal health and stamina.

The third salient theme, maintaining focus and political savvy, incorporated four major strategies for overcoming barriers and challenges as the informants strive for success in the profession. First, when faced with overt discriminative behaviors, challenges, or conflicts, the most popular strategy was "going one-on-one." Most of the informants said they were never afraid to engage in direct, open confrontations behind closed doors to deal with problematic issues or individuals. The second most critical strategy was forming multiple, strategic layers of support and alliances to counteract resistance, tackle challenges, and achieve goals. Building formal and informal power as well as influence at multiple levels was highlighted as the most indispensable criterion for leadership success and effectiveness. When faced with various forms of adversity or provocative situations, what worked best for coping was the ability to control one's emotions and see through the muck to remain focused

and productive. Last, the juggling act was achieved through the utilization of all possible skills, support and resources, such as multi-tasking, time management, help from spouses and hired individuals, employing university facilities and activities, protecting personal relationships and health, and use of internal drive and motivation to sustain oneself.

The fourth, yet the most important, finding resulting from this study was the differences that the number of men and women presidents and vice presidents can make to individual leaders' experiences at work. All but one informant voluntarily testified how once women reach parity in number as presidents and vice presidents, their vulnerability to gender bias, exclusion, resistance, or skepticism can be significantly reduced. The next theme revealed the fact that being a woman continues to bring more disadvantages than advantages to women, whether at the professional or personal levels. Although the door to leadership opportunity was opened for the participants, when they compared themselves with their counterparts, they found themselves making more sacrifices and being burdened with more implicit and explicit challenges with much less support.

The last theme, competing as a woman: prepared and ready, can be summarized into the following advice and strategies for career success. Based on the collective wisdom of the nine highly effective and successful cabinet-level women leaders, the following pieces of gold were offered. They are in fact good for anybody who is interested in top leadership positions in higher education, men or women.

Do:

- Get the terminal degree and all required qualifications.

- Do your homework and request equal treatment as well as institutional support.

- Gain a solid base of expertise and do a spectacular job.

- Surround yourself with good, strong mentors.

- Study your institution and understand the norms of practice.

- Socialize with people and develop good interpersonal skills.

- Develop decision-making and negotiation skills.

- Serve on campus, community, and professional committees to gain visibility.

- Engage in professional development programs to enhance leadership skills.

- Use multiple as well as strategic layers of support networks and assistance.

- Be creative and flexible with things you can do or change.

- Utilize both masculine and feminine traits as well as strengths.

- Know yourself, be yourself, and follow your inclinations.

- Focus on your goals and use humor as well as emotional intelligence.

- Listen to criticism and make necessary adjustments.

- Develop a passion for learning and reading.

- Learn to assess and navigate through campus politics to accomplish goals.

- Develop expertise in finance, law, personnel management, and supervision.

- Learn to handle stress and be attentive to health issues.

Do not:

- Lead like a man.

- Be afraid to stand up for yourself and say "no."

- Emulate male leadership behaviors or language.

- Stay in a job for too long.

- Take things for granted.

- "Help others out" without getting any credit or recognition.

- Be afraid to take risks or limit yourself.

- Confide in people you should not trust.

- Expect to be treated as a second-rate citizen.

- Hold grudges or give up easily.

- Wait for others to "find" you.

Comparisons of results drawn from this study with existing literature and discussion of major findings as well as contributions of this research to the literature about women leaders in higher education will be presented in the following section.

## Conclusions

The main purpose of the study was to determine how some women have managed to succeed as high-ranking executive officers in American four-year public institutions of higher learning. Based on nine successful senior women leaders' own life experiences as well as their observations of other women leaders in higher education, patterns of success, challenges, and adaptations emerged. The rich, thorough, inspiring, profound data and findings presented in Chapters Four and Five not only answered all research questions posed in Chapter Three but also developed into a rich handbook for practice. While many points and findings are worth mentioning, the following conclusions drawn from this study are most important from the researcher's standpoint.

1. <u>When the number of men and women on the executive teams are equally weighted, gender evaporates as an issue for women</u>. The most unexpected yet important finding of the current study is the recently developed trend of gender-balanced senior executive teams at some public four-year universities. The most critical contribution of this

research exists in the revelation of the critical importance of "the dynamics of numbers." Informants in this study reported two clear but opposite patterns of lived experiences in the workplace. Women leaders who once worked or are still working as the "token" ones reported many more negative encounters and challenges than those women leaders working as members of executive teams with equal numbers of men and women presidents and vice presidents.

Award-winning Harvard scholar Rosabeth Kanter (1993) proposed a theory that is most suitable for the explanation of how the number of men and women on the leadership team can affect both the group dynamics and individual leader's experiences. While a social category such as gender did not affect leadership teams that were composed of all men or women, or of equal numbers of men and women, women serving as "tokens" at senior levels do suffer from cultural differences and disadvantages.

The subtleties a token woman can experience range from gossip or rumors, public scrutiny, high visibility for her differences, the pressure to outperform and not make mistakes, the requirement to be both as good as the men and fulfill her male colleagues' ideas of a good woman, the pressure to conform with male norms and standards, criticism for leading or talking like a man, gender-related assignments and overload, to exclusion from "the boys'" games or networks (Kanter, 1980, 1993). The perfect match between Kanter's theory and descriptions of negative workplace experiences common to token women leaders and the challenges reported by most of the participants, especially when few women were in leadership positions, is astonishing. No wonder both the informants' and scholars' (Kanter, 1980, 1993; Quina, Cotter, & Romenesko, 1998) collective wisdom for resolving women leaders' struggles is to include more qualified women on senior leadership teams as a means

of increasing their influence on the traditional, unchallenged, taken-for-granted management

culture as well as of balancing out the disadvantages facing the token ones.

To compare and contrast the informants' experiences as tokens versus as members of

a balanced social group in the senior leadership team, Table 5 below was composed.

Table 5

*A Comparison between Women Leaders' Token Experiences versus Their Experiences with*

*Gender-Balanced Leadership Teams*

| Token experiences | Experiences with gender-balanced teams |
|---|---|
| • You never really know what the true deal is, and where he [the president] might land because it is never clear. | • We're all around the table. She [the president] has all the people there. She doesn't have little secret groups. |
| • Many of the decisions are made before you get to the formal decision-making table. You can tell that they are already made. Many of them are made by the men VPs. You can tell. | • All of a sudden, around the table, there are more women than men. They [male VPs] are like, okay, the rules have changed. Now what do I do? It's not the rule I'm familiar with. |
| • The old boys network…is hard for women to get in. | • They [male VPs] are used to having more of the old boys' club. |
| • You have to be able to socialize with males. I enjoy playing their games. I enjoy playing golf with them. | • There are none of these…have a golf game and figure it out and tell everybody else. I mean, we're all around the table. |
| • You've got to find out what the people who are around your cabinet are interested in. | • I play golf, but I don't do that professionally. I don't do that with people I work with because I don't have time. |
| • You hear hurtful comments and personal attacks for being different. | • Gender becomes invisible as an issue in the conversation. |
| • You feel invisible in meetings. | • You can't ignore five or six voices. |
| • I am under the microscope 24 hours a day. | • As more women join the leadership team, men will have to change. |

When addressing the issue of tokenism, Kanter (1980, 1993) pointed out a paradoxical

situation for women leaders. On the one hand, tokens experience intense visibility and

scrutiny because of their differences; on the other hand, they are often ignored, isolated, and

excluded from both formal and informal social activities or networks formed by their male

counterparts. As Kanter (1993) noted, changing the culture of a management team as the only or one of a few women is a very difficult, even daunting task. However, once the group's composition becomes more balanced, women, as an equivalent social group, can function more equally as individuals than as representatives of their social group.

With an increase in the number of women in the work group, women will have a better chance to influence the management culture and norms by bringing new perspectives, values, ideas, and ways of doing things. Furthermore, since nobody stands out in a gender-balanced group, the focus naturally turns away from individual differences to the tasks ahead. Her speculation of gender-neutral group interactions and an equal playing field for men and women in gender-balanced senior leadership groups has already become a newly developed reality at some institutions, according to the results of this study.

2. <u>Some traditional gender expectations and social norms have been relaxed for women, and more leadership opportunities have been made available. However, subtle barriers continue to plague women both in the employment and workplace arenas.</u> Even if campus climate and management culture can be temporarily or gradually warmed up for women, whether the trend will be vigilantly guarded and secured by the larger social context is still a question. The hostility and intense scrutiny from the media toward the increase of women in top leadership positions, as reported by some informants, for example, reflects the lack of acceptance of local media as well as subconscious doubt and fear of women's dominance.

Scholars like Acker (1992, 2004); Arlton, Lewellen, and Brissett (1999); Kimmel (2004); Mandel (2003); Quina, Cotter, and Romenesko (1998); Rhode (2003); and Tennen (1990) confirmed the difficulty in changing deeply rooted gender stereotypes and bias

regarding what men and women should be or act like, and how such social norms and gender expectations can bring more trouble for women leaders. Consequently, the answer to the question of whether times have changed for women or not, based on the findings from this research and those found in existing literature, is "yes and no." Geiger's (1999) explanation of why history should be studied can be used again here as a rationale to describe the situation facing the informants: "because things change and because some things do not change" (p. 38).

When compared with the 1950s and 1960s, the general climate for women in the workplace has obviously improved. However, while participants working at women-friendly institutions confidently said that it is easier for women to get recognition and opportunities now, those serving at "not-so-women-friendly" campuses or communities still wonder when the glass ceiling at their institutions will be completely shattered or when local media will fully embrace women leaders and their strengths. Some informants also pointed out that with the progress of the society, the once overt barriers have now turned to subtle, little things that are hard to identify as sexist because most people currently are too sophisticated to act out overt sexist behaviors.

3. <u>The need to overachieve and outperform constantly is a built-in strategy used by senior-level women executives to prove their competence</u>. This finding from the current study is in sync with results of previous works on women in higher education administration. Like senior women leaders studied by Clemons (1998), Cline (1996), Dietz (1997), and Gatteau (2000), the first and foremost strategy for career success employed by the nine informants in this study is constantly to overachieve and outperform as a means of proving that they are as equally competent as their male counterparts.

The question is: Why do women have to be twice as good to be considered as capable as men or as worthwhile leaders? Jamieson (1995), among others (e.g., Cantor, Bernay, & Stoess, 1992; Collins, 1998; Kanter, 1980, 1993; Quina, Cotter, & Romenesko, 1998; Stokes, 1984), argued that due to societal bias and the myth about women's intellectual inferiority, women often must pass "a higher competence threshold" (p. 122) to prove their ability and legitimacy to lead. The unified voice of women leaders about the consistent pressure to be "exceptionally" good can actually be interpreted as a hidden challenge for women, only it is much more subtle and hard to substantiate.

As Kanter (1980) contended, true equality is not achieved unless females can stand out by just being as good as their male counterparts. If women leaders always have to be better prepared, more qualified, and more productive than everybody else to achieve and retain success, then can the claim that gender bias has disappeared for women be made with peace of mind?

4. Effective senior women executives emphasize the need to know and be themselves, to do the right thing, and to develop and use their own personal way of leading. According to most informants of this study as well as scholars (Dietz, 1997; Flanagan, 2002; Gatteau, 2000; Gerdes, 2003; Helgesen, 1990; Nidiffer, 2001b), the best way to deal with troubles caused by the incongruity between the leader role and the gender role expected of them is to develop women's own way of leading. The positive side of being non-traditional leaders is the opportunity to use women's unique strengths and assets to create comparative advantages as leaders.

The advocacy for women to know and be themselves in order to lead in their own way, nonetheless, revealed yet another reality facing senior women executives. Unlike men

leaders, as the "outsider," the "newcomer," or the token ones, women leaders experience the extra burden of having to juggle between the need to fit in with male norms and standards to survive and the need to figure out a less threatening way of leading for both male and female constituents.

For instance, on the one hand, some of the informants in this study picked up sports such as golf or tennis while others learned to use male terms and language to blend in. On the other hand, knowing how leading like a man can create alienation and resistance, some of them emphasized the need to evaluate their environment constantly and adapt accordingly while holding tight to their own values and gradually developing a different way of leading. In particular, most informants stressed the importance of holding tight to both personal and institutional core values as they steer themselves as well as their institutions through difficult decisions or crises along the way. The best source of motivating and sustaining power comes from knowing that they have done everything they can to do what is right for their institutions and to safeguard the best interests of their organizations.

5. Effective senior women executives have acquired a unique blend of personal attributes, including a heavy dose of independence, a risk-taking mentality, a plethora of finely honed skills in management as well as human relations, and a healthy achievement orientation. At the personal level, reasons behind the nine informants' success range from personal traits, leadership skills, to the use of domestic assistance. The composite demographic data presented in Chapter Four show that most of the informants in the study were not born with a silver spoon in their mouths.

As first-generation college students, some of them never dreamed that they would become a university president or vice president one day. Fortunately, their potential and

talents were not wasted because they met people who believed in them and helped them remove unnecessary career obstacles. Although each of them is unique, common personality traits emerged. A collective portrait of these outstanding women includes adjectives such as these: independent, smart, highly motivated, eager-to-learn, achievement-oriented, hard-working, competent, outgoing, confident, efficient, competitive, risk-taking, decisive, focused, optimistic, emotionally mature, and tenacious.

Besides personal qualities, informants highlighted critical skills for personal leadership effectiveness and success. Among them, interpersonal and decision-making skills; collaborative and participatory leadership styles; negotiation; networking; observation, assessment, and political navigation; community-building and communication; conflict management; emotional management; strategic planning; and implementation skills were most often cited requirements for successful leadership experiences. In brief, personal effectiveness must be supplemented with institutional, political, and leadership acuity for career success.

6. Effective senior women executives are experts at forging multiple, strategic layers of support through connections, collaboration, networking, sponsorship, and advocacy. In terms of overcoming barriers and challenges, depending on the situations and the players involved, the informants learned to develop and flexibly employ an array of effective skills and strategies. Among the many strategies on which they relied, either to secure their leadership effectiveness or to combat difficult situations in their professional and personal lives, the most essential and indispensable are forging strategic and multiple layers of support through connections, collaboration, networking, sponsorship, and advocacy.

Gupton and Slick (1996), Kanter (1993), Landino and Welch (1990), Nidiffer, (2001c), Quina, Cotter, and Romenesko, (1998), Rhode, (2003), and Wheeler (1988) all noted that strong, powerful, and collaborative support networks are particularly important for women who are working in male-dominated contexts and shouldering burdens from both family and work. Another noteworthy finding is that, like women vice presidents included in Walton and McDade's (2001) nationwide study, informants of the current study use help from both male and female mentors. Nevertheless, advancement opportunities, as noted by some scholars (Bashaw & Nidiffer, 2002; Warner & DeFleur, 1993), are more likely to be presented by male mentors who continue to be better connected and included within both formal and informal power structures.

When facing structural, cultural, and political obstacles to success, the informants used change agents including themselves, colleagues, mentors, allies, advocates, internal as well as external coalitions, and sponsors to help them address their needs and issues. Similarly, many informants noted that the last piece of the puzzle for personal effectiveness was seeking help with domestic responsibilities and relying on support from family, friends, and spiritual foundations to relieve stress created at the office. The stress to juggle between family and work is very intense for women with children. Consequently, the more sources of help and support women leaders utilize, the better off they are when the need arises to devote themselves fully to their work. Among the many support systems, the biggest, most effective, and most treasured help, according to the informants, is the understanding and sharing of both domestic burdens and workplace pressures with their spouses.

7. <u>When adversity arises, effective senior women leaders do not give up. Instead, they remain focused and approach difficulty calmly as well as positively</u>. Another important

criterion for survival and success in highly competitive and stressful workplaces, as some scholars (Goleman, 1995, 1998; Witmer, 1995) highlighted, is the ability to remain focused and cool-headed by accepting adversity with calmness, humor, positive attitudes, and emotional intelligence. Rather than allowing people who insisted on "throwing sand in the gears" to distract them, these leaders simply choose to ignore the minor negativities and let irrelevant criticism fall off their backs. Although never afraid to confront people when needed, the informants learned early on to pick their battles, not take themselves too seriously, maintain their "cool," let go of what cannot be changed, and to focus on what can be done to survive as well as thrive. In doing so, they regain the power to turn obstacles into opportunities for self-improvement and continued success.

8. <u>According to societal norms, senior women executives still have two full-time jobs: one at the workplace and one at home</u>. Based on these participants' lived experiences, at the professional level, being a woman has both advantages and disadvantages. With the progress society has made and the implementation of affirmative action guidelines, their gender no longer keeps them from acquiring powerful posts in higher education. However, their rarity and differences from the predominantly masculine leadership group in the upper echelon and the social paradox that requires them to prove themselves as tough as men while not abandoning the traits ascribed to women continues to cause problems for them. Kanter (1980, 1993), Kellerman (2003), Kimmel (2004), Mandel (2003), Powell and Graves (2003); Tennen (2001), and Rhode (2003), for instance, all contended that the persistence of gender ideologies and leader stereotypes have benefited men more than women.

At the personal level, being a woman as compared to a man definitely means more domestic burdens and juggling acts (Bruckner, 1998; Thompson & Beavais, 2000; Villadsen

& Tack, 1986; Waggoner, 1998; Wilmore, 1998). Evidence drawn from the current study, as well as statistics provided by the American Council on Education in 2002, can prove that women presidents and vice presidents are much less likely to have a career, marriage, and children. Evidently, women today continue to have to sacrifice more as well as pay a higher price for career success. Consequently, changes need to be made to create a more equitable and supportive environment for women in the academy.

Some informants, with their sense of humor and positive attitudes, saw how motherhood increased their ability to mediate between conflicting interests and individuals. They also saw that as long as they are married and/or have children, their family would always be considered as their primary responsibility area instead of their spouses', no matter how successful they are as professional career women. Regarding the issue of disparities between the division of housework for men and women, Rhode (1997) argued that many extra domestic burdens for women are invisible.

> Rather than accept an equal division of cleaning, cooking, or childcare obligations, some men redefine their share as unnecessary; they don't mind a little mess or a fast-food dinner, and their infants will do just fine with extra time among their "friends" at daycare. Other men seem not to notice when some of their assigned tasks need doing, or else mismanage key parts of the job. Rather than broadcast constant reminders or complaints, many women simply pick up pieces that their partners don't even realize have been dropped. (p. 7)

Without doubt, the task of making the invisible visible is challenging yet critical. Unless more people realize and recognize the unequal share of work and burdens falling on women's shoulders, women's struggles and needs cannot be fully addressed or corrected. Moreover, the challenge of advocating for women's equal rights and privileges resides not just in the technical difficulty of capturing the subtlety of gender bias but also in the lack of recognition and marginality of women's studies at male-dominated academic institutions

(Martin, 2000; Morris, 2002; Ropers-Huilman & Shackelford, 2003; Ropers-Huilman &

Taliaferro, 2003). Morris (2002), for instance, particularly warned about "the backlash

against women's studies" (p. 161). If institutional leaders are truly devoted to the correction

of social issues such as gender inequality, they should try every means possible to encourage

and support women's programs and studies instead of undermining their necessity and

values.

<div align="center">Recommendations for Action and Further Study</div>

Knowing how women's needs and interests can be put aside or ignored easily,

Harvard scholar Rhode (1997) contended,

> Despite these [gender discrimination] patterns, most Americans do not perceive
> gender inequity as a serious problem. The topic is an unwelcome intruder in most
> conversations. When speaking of sex, we like to discuss sexual relationships, sexual
> deviance, and sexual difference; we prefer to avoid sexual inequality and the patterns
> that sustain it. Even those who share the basic goals of the women's movement fail to
> give them priority personally, politically, or financially. (p. 2)

Consequently, one of the women presidents Gatteau (2000) interviewed advocated the

exploration of "which gender benefits under existing structures. If the benefit, whether in the

form of promotion, salary, or status, is attributed more to one gender than the other, then the

issue warrants exploration and corrective measures" (pp. 186-187).

Whether from the historical, socio-cultural, structural perspectives, or from research

findings drawn from previous works as well as from the current study, the battle toward

deconstructing the traditional preconceived patriarchal contexts for women is not over yet.

To build a better future and a more diversified, equitable system of leading, learning, and

teaching for all constituents, higher education leaders need to continue to invest their efforts

and energy in re-examining, re-defining, and re-structuring the traditional, taken-for-granted

systems of higher learning. Consequently, the researcher recommends that the following leadership actions be taken:

- Continue to support affirmative action initiatives by hiring more women leaders because the historical social issue of gender inequality at multiple levels of higher education has neither been quickly nor easily "fixed" in the past 40 years since the establishment of the Civil Rights Act in 1964.

- Provide more assistance, options, and support for executive women officers, such as domestic help, flexible work hours, and routine programs/activities for the spouses of women presidents, vice presidents, deans, directors, and so on, to keep them informed and involved in collegiate activities.

- Make sure that when leading an imbalanced work group or leadership team, the voices of the few receive equal attention, recognition, and respect. Encourage avoidance, whenever possible, of gender stereotypes or special scrutiny toward the disadvantaged group.

- Promote inclusiveness and diversity at all levels by inviting a diversified pool of participants for ideas, discussion, talents, and decision-making. Guard against an inhospitable work climate, bias toward women, and ignorance to the needs as well as interests of the major clientele of the academy.

- Provide professional development and mentoring opportunities, particularly for those with greater needs, like women and minorities, who tend to be disproportionally underrepresented in senior professorial and administrative posts.

- Create a family-friendly working environment by providing programs, facilities, and services that respond to the needs of people with children and elderly family members. Revise university policies to make the balancing act between work and life easier for both men and women.

- Encourage research on women's issues and equitable treatment for women. For instance, conduct campus-wide salary equity studies, and if disparities are found, initiate necessary actions to ensure equality for all.

This research effort developed into a wealth of interesting issues and topics that are worth further examination and exploration. Based on the research findings and conclusions drawn from the study, the researcher recommends the following strands of inquiry for further investigation:

- Conduct a similar qualitative study with male senior leaders to compare and contrast men and women leaders' experiences in the higher education workplace. Do men also experience the pressure to prove continuously that they are competent enough for their positions? Do they face the pressure to be better than everyone else to succeed and remain in their leadership posts? Do they feel the need to fit in with the existing management culture? Has being oneself and leading in one's own way ever been an issue for them?

- Compare and contrast comparable institutions that have many versus few women in senior leadership posts. Analyze both internal and external contextual factors that help perpetuate opposite campus climates for women in leadership positions. Identify the elements required for some institutions to

accept more women at the helm and the reasons why changing patriarchal traditions has been so hard for some institutions.

- Identify and follow up with gender-balanced and/or female-dominated cabinets. How long do they last? What are the factors that sustain or reverse the changes? What are internal and external stakeholders' reactions, attitudes, and feelings about entrusting most of the power and the future of the institutions into women's hands? Why? Do people feel confident, comfortable, positive, or uncertain, worried, negative about such action?

- Has the increase in the proportion of women in senior leadership created negative effects or discomfort for men? When men become the token executives, do they experience the same special scrutiny, exclusion, isolation, or extra pressure to perform or do they retain their status as equal members with their voices well attended?

- Compare and contrast successful men and women leaders' experiences in male-dominated professions and posts, such as vice presidents for finance and vice presidents for research. Identify factors that cause the scarcity of women in those positions as well as ways to assist more women in assuming such powerful, influential positions.

- Compare and contrast differences between women's perceptions about gender bias and their gender identities, particularly between those who come from male-dominated fields and those from female-dominated disciplines. What factors can influence women leaders' awareness, advocacy, and commitment to women's needs? What are the consequences of their actions?

- Continue to identify both blatant and subtle barriers and challenges facing women leaders today and their combating strategies. If possible, use the snowball sampling strategy to focus on women who experienced a lot of obstacles in their careers. What other difficulties or problems have women experienced in higher education administration? What other skills and strategies have been employed to help women succeed more easily? How do the results compare to this study?

Results from the current study yield both good and bad news. The good news is that the glass ceiling at some institutions has been totally shattered. At those institutions, women as equal members of the community are well represented even at the center of the power structure; their voices are heard, and their rights are well protected. Moreover, female leaders are less vulnerable because of differences from their male counterparts or forerunners; and they are not expected to adhere to the traditional, uniform male leadership model. The bad news is that the glass ceiling at some institutions is still firmly in place. The window over the ceiling may open for a while, but then it closes again. Moreover, females who are "different" in the predominantly male leadership groups continue to experience difficulty making the team. In other words, a women-friendly environment and climate in leadership is never secure. Accompanying the "outsiders" are often alienation, skepticism, resistance, silence, devaluation, and fewer opportunities or options.

In summary, when Pearson, Shavlik, and Touchton (1988) addressed the issue on the national context for women in higher education, they concluded:

> The history of higher education for women is replete with challenges by women for access to institutions, to particular academic disciplines, to programs. Some of these challenges have been met with positive change, some with indifference, and some with rejection, claiming women cannot succeed. The history of women in the

academy has been one of pluses and minuses, pushes and pulls, but never has American higher education fully responded to women for themselves. (p. 3)

Other scholars concurred (Ireland, 2003; Kellerman, 2003; Morris, 2002; Rhode, 1997, 2003). As Ireland (2003) contended, progress does not equal parity. Rhode's (1997) concern resided in the over-optimism about women's progress as well as the quick achievement of a fully equal society. She argued, "No just society could tolerate the inequalities that women now experience in status, income, power, and physical security. The challenge remaining is to make those inequalities visible and to translate our personal aspirations into political commitments" (p. 20). Consequently, both the task of proving "the difference 'difference' makes" (Rhode, 2003) and that of finding personal as well as institutional strategies needed for the creation of an equitable working environment must be continued before true equality, diversity, and inclusion can be secured for all and for good.

REFERENCES

Acker, J. (1992). From sex roles to gendered institutions. *Contemporary Sociology*, *21*, 565-569.

Acker, J. (2004). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. In M. S. Kimmel, & A. Aronson (Eds.), *The gendered society reader* (2nd ed.) (pp. 264-277). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Albino, J. E. (1992). Strategy: The dirty word that women must learn. *Educational Record*, *73*, 47-51.

Allen, L. H. (1986). On being a vice president for academic affairs. In P. A. Farrant (Ed.), *Strategies and attitudes: Women in educational administration* (pp. 104-111). Washington, DC: National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors.

Altbach, P. G. (1999). Patterns in higher education development. In P. G. Altbach, R. O. Berdahl, & P. J. Gumport (Eds.), *American higher education in the twenty-first century: Social, political, and economic challenges* (pp. 15-37). Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Alvesson, M., & Billing, Y. D. (1997). *Understanding gender and organizations*. London: Sage.

American Council on Education. (1995). *Women presidents in U.S. colleges and universities*. Washington, DC: American Council on Education, Office of Women in Higher Education.

American Council on Education. (2002). *The American college president: 2002 edition.* Washington, DC: American Council on Education, Center for Policy Analysis.

Anderson, R. T., & Ramey, P. (1990). Women in higher education: Development through administrative mentoring. In L. B. Welch (Ed.), *Women in higher education: Changes and challenges* (pp. 183-190). New York: Praeger.

Anglis, C. M. (1990). Career advancement strategies utilized by selected women college and university administrators in a Midwestern state. *(*Doctoral dissertation, Bowling Green State University, 1990). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *52,* 03A.: 0747.

Appelbaum, S. H., & Shapiro, B. T. (1993). Why can't men lead like women? *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *14*(7), 28-34.

Arlton, D., Lewellen, A., & Brissett, B. (1999). Social systems barriers of women in academia: A review of historical and current issues. In M. McCoy, & J. DiGeorgio-Lutz (Eds.), *The women-centered university: Interdisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 61-70). Lanham, MD: University Press of America, Inc.

Auerbach, C. F., & Silverstein, L. B. (2003). *Qualitative data: An introduction to coding and analysis*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

Ausejo, L. (1993). Women administrators' emerging personal and professional concerns. In P. T. Mitchell (Ed.), *Cracking the wall: Women in higher education administration* (pp. 71-87). Washington, DC: The College and University Personnel Association.

Babcock, L., & Laschever, S. (2003). *Women don't ask: Negotiation and the gender divide*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Ball, E. E. (1991). Negotiating the financial package. In J. A. Sturnick, J. E. Milley, & C. A. Tisinger (Eds.), *Women at the helm: Pathfinding presidents at state colleges and universities* (pp. 83-95). Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Bashaw, C. T. & Nidiffer, J. (2002). Women administrators in higher education today and in the future. In J. Nidiffer, & C. T. Bashaw (Eds.), *Women administrators in higher education: Historical and contemporary perspectives* (pp. 271-278). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Bass, B. M. (1981). *Stogdill's handbook of leadership: A survey of theory and research*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Bass, B. M. (1990). *Bass & Stogdill's handbook of leadership*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Bennis, W. (1999). The end of leadership: Exemplary leadership is impossible without full inclusion, initiatives, and cooperation of followers. *Organizational Dynamics*, *28*(1), 71-80.

Benokraitis, N. V. (1998). Working in the ivory basement: Subtle sex discrimination in higher education. In L. H. Collins, J. C. Chrisler, & K. Ouina (Eds.), *Career strategies for women in academe: Arming Athena* (pp. 3-43). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Birnbaum, R., & Umbach, P. D. (2001). Scholar, steward, spanner, stranger: The four career paths of college presidents. *The Review of Higher Education*, *24*(3), 203-217.

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2003). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education Group, Inc.

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1992). Leading and managing: Effects of context, culture, and gender. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *28*(3), 314-329.

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1997). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bond, S. (2000). Culture and feminine leadership. In M. Kearney (Ed.), *Women, power and the academy: From rhetoric to reality* (pp. 79-85). Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations Publishing & Berghahn Books.

Bower, F. L. (1993). Women and mentoring in higher education administration. In P. T. Mitchell (Ed.), *Cracking the wall: Women in higher education administration* (pp. 89-98). Washington, DC: The College and University Personnel Association.

Braun, R. (1990). The downside of mentoring. In L. B. Welch (Ed.), *Women in higher education: Changes and challenges* (pp. 191-198). New York: Praeger.

Brause, R. S. (2000). *Writing your doctoral dissertation: Invisible rules for success*. New York, NY: Falmer Press.

Brown, G., Van Ummersen, C., & Sturnick, J. (2001). *From where we sit: Women's perspectives on the presidency*. Advancing Women's Leadership I. Washington, DC: American Council on Education, Office of Women in Higher Education.

Brown, L. M., & Gilligan, C. (1992). *Meeting at the crossroads: Women's psychology and girls' development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brown, T. M. (2000). Female presidents of selected independent colleges: Career paths, profiles, and experiences (Doctoral dissertation, North Carolina State University, 2000). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *61,* 06A.: 2205.

Bruckner, M. (1998). The balancing act of women leaders. In G. Brown, & B. I. Irby (Eds.), *Women and leadership: Creating balance in life* (pp. 211-231). Commack, NY: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Buzzanell, P. M. (1995). Reframing the glass ceiling as a socially constructed progress: Implications for understanding and change. *Communication Monographs*, *62*, 327-354.

Cantor, D. W., & Bernay, T. (1992). *Women in power*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin.

Carli, L. L. (1998). Coping with adversity. In L. H. Collins, J. C. Chrisler, & K. Quina (Eds.), *Career strategies for women in academe: Arming Athena* (pp. 275-302). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Carli, L. L., & Eagly, A. H. (2001). Gender, hierarchy, and leadership: An introduction. *Journal of Social Issues*, *57*(4), 629-636.

Carnegie Foundation. (2000). *Carnegie Classification of Higher Education Institutions*. Retrieved July 23, 2005, from http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/dynamic/downloads/file._1_200.pdf

Chamberlain, M. (2001). Women and leadership in higher education. In C. B. Costello, & A. J. Stone (Eds.), *The American women 2001-2002: Getting to the top* (pp. 63-87). New York: Women's Research and Education Institute.

Chamberlain, M. K. (1988). *Women in academe: Progress and prospects*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Chliwniak, L. (1997). *Higher education leadership: Analyzing the gender gap* (Report No. EDO-HE-97-4). Washington, DC: George Washington University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 410 846)

Clark, M. C., & Caffarella, R. S. (1999). Women in leadership: Living with the constraints of the glass ceiling. *Initiatives*, *59*(1), 65-76.

Clemons, S. A. (1998). How women administrators in public higher education choose and engage in their "battles:" A phenomenological study (Doctoral dissertation, Colorado State University, 1998). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *60,* 03A.: 0668.

Cline, K. R. (1996). Pressing the ceiling: Stories of women executives in higher education (Doctoral dissertation, Hofstra University, 1996). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *57,* 06A.: 2378.

Cohen, A. M. (1998). *The shaping of American higher education: Emergence and growth of the contemporary system*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc.

Collins, L. H. (1998). Competition and contact: The dynamics behind resistance to affirmative action in academe. In L. H. Collins, J. C. Chrisler, & K. Quina (Eds.), *Career strategies for women in academe: Arming Athena* (pp. 45-79). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cook, S. G. (2001). How to get where you want to go. In M. D. Wenniger, & M. H. Conroy (Eds.), *Gender equity or bust! On the road to campus leadership with women in higher education* (pp. 145-150). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2002). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Currie, J., & Thiele, B. (2001). Globalization and gendered work cultures in universities. In A. Brooks, & A. Mackinnon (Eds.), *Gender and the restructured university: Changing management and culture in higher education* (pp. 90-115). Philadelphia, PA: SRHE & Open University Press.

Curry, B. K. (2000). *Women in power: Pathways to leadership in education*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Dickerson, A., & Taylor, M. A. (2000). Self-limiting behavior in women. *Group & Organization Management*, *25*(2), 191-210.

Dickson, A. (2000). *Women at work: Strategies for survival and success*. Dover, NH: Kogan Page.

Die, A. H. (1999). Reflections on presidential longevity. *The Presidency*, *2*(3), 32-37.

Dietz, L. D. (1997). Women in higher education administration: A cultural approach. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1997). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *59,* 01A.: 0032.

Eagly, A. H. & Carli, L. L. (2003). The female leadership advantage: An evaluation of the evidence. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 14, 807-834.

Eisinger, J. (2002). Secrets of her success. D. Shalala's reflections on effective leadership. *Association Management*, *54*(10), 72-74.

Elder, P. (1986). The importance of professional involvement. In P. A. Farrant (Ed.), *Strategies and attitudes: Women in educational administration* (pp. 125-131). Washington, DC: National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors.

English, C. A. (2000). Power, resistance, and women in administration (Doctoral dissertation, Georgia State University, 2000). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *61,* 03A.: 828.

Etaugh, C. (1986). Women faculty and administrators in higher education: Changes in their status since 1972. In P. A. Farrant (Ed.), *Strategies and attitudes: Women in educational administration* (pp. 132-136). Washington, DC: National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors.

Euben, D. R. (2001). Show me the money: Pay equity in the academy. *Academe-Bulletin of the AAUP*, *87*(4), 30-36.

Fenkins, D. (1994). Let's play the negotiation game! In M. D. Wenniger, & M. H. Conroy (Eds.), *Gender equity or bust! On the road to campus leadership with women in higher education* (pp. 105-108). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Fisher, J. L., Tack, M. W., & Wheeler, K. J. (1988). *The effective college president*. New York, NY: American Council on Education/Macmillan.

Flanagan, A. (2002). Defining moments: The creation and impact of leadership values for women in higher education administration (Doctoral dissertation, Eastern Michigan University, 2002). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *59,* 05A,: 1479.

Fraenkel, J. R., & Wallen, N. E. (2000). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

Fretwell Jr., E. K. (1991). Foreword. In J. A. Sturnick, J. E. Milley, & C. A. Tisinger (Eds.), *Women at the helm: Pathfinding presidents at state colleges and universities* (pp. ix-xi). Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Gatteau, R. J. (2000). Breaking barriers in higher education: An exploration of female presidential leadership at selective institutions (Doctoral dissertation, Fordham University, 2000). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *61,* 06A.: 2209.

Gay, L. R., & Airasian, P. (2000). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and application* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Geiger, R. (1999). The ten generations of American higher education. In P. G. Altbach, R. O. Berdahl, & P. J. Gumport (Eds.), *American higher education in the twenty-first century: Social, political, and economic challenges* (pp. 38-69). Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Gerdes, E. P. (2003). Do it your way: Advice from senior academic women. *Innovative Higher Education*, *27*(4), 253-275.

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Glazer-Raymo, J. (2002). Women in higher education. In J. J. Forest, & K. Kinser (Eds.), *Higher education in the United States: An encyclopedia I* (pp. 699-704). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

Glesne, C. (1998). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York, NY: Bantam.

Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with emotional intelligence*. New York, NY: Bantam.

Golombok, S., & Fivush, R. (1994). *Gender development*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Growe, R., & Montgomery, P. (1999). *Women and the leadership paradigm: Bridging the gender gap*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 419 292)

Gupton, S. L., & Slick, G. A. (1996). *Highly successful women administrators: The inside story of how they got there*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Guteck, B. A. (2001). Women and paid work. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *25*, 379-393.

Harris, S., Lowery, S., & Arnold, M. (2002). When women educators are commuters in commuter marriages [Electronic version]. *Advancing Women in Leadership Journal*, *10*(1). Retrieved March 5, 2004, from http://www.advancingwomen.com/awl/winter2002/harris.html

Harrow, A. J. (1993). Power and politics: The leadership challenge. In P. T. Mitchell (Ed.), *Cracking the wall: Women in higher education administration* (pp.141-158). Washington, DC: The College and University Personnel Association.

Harter, C. C. (1993). Women, leadership, and the academy: Anecdotes and observations. In P. T. Mitchell (Ed.), *Cracking the wall: Women in higher education administration* (pp. 21-27). Washington, DC: The College and University Personnel Association.

Hearn, J. (2001). Academia, management and men: Making the connections, exploring the implications. In A. Brooks, & A. Mackinnon (Eds.), *Gender and the restructured university* (pp. 67-89). Philadelphia, PA: SRHE and Open University Press.

Helgesen, S. (1990). *The female advantage: Women's ways of leadership*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Hensel, N. (1991). *Realizing gender equity in higher education: The need to integrate work/family issues*. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 2. Washington, DC: The George Washington University, School of Education and Human Development.

Ireland, R. (2003). Progress versus equality: Are we there yet? In D. L. Rhode (Ed.). *The difference "difference" makes: Women and leadership* (pp. 193-202). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Jablonski, M. (1996). The leadership challenge for women college presidents. *Initiatives*, *57*(4), 1-10.

Jamieson, K. H. (1995). *Beyond the double bind: Women and leadership*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Johnsrud, L. K. (1991). Administrative promotion: The power of gender. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *62*(2), 119-149.

Johnsrud, L. K., & Heck, R. H. (1994). Administrative promotion within a university: The cumulative impact of gender. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *65*(1), 23-44.

Jones, B. (1993). Redesigning the ivory tower: Opening the drawbridge to women with multiple roles. In P. T. Mitchell (Ed.), *Cracking the wall: Women in higher education administration* (pp. 53-68). Washington, DC: The College and University Personnel Association.

Kanter, R. M. (1980). *A Tale of "O:" On being different in an organization*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Kanter, R. M. (1993). *Men and women of the corporation*. New York, NY: BasicBooks.

Kearney, M. (2000). Overview: From rhetoric to reality. In M. Kearney (Ed.), *Women, power and the academy* (pp. 1-17). Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations Publishing & Berghahn Books.

Kellerman, B. (2003). You've come a long way, baby—and you've got miles to go. In D. L. Rhode (Ed.). *The difference "difference" makes: Women and leadership* (pp. 53-58). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Kenny, S. S. (1991). Women presidents/chancellors in an urban setting. In J. A. Sturnick, J. E. Milley, & C. A. Tisinger (Eds.), *Women at the helm: Pathfinding presidents at state colleges and universities* (pp. 59-64). Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Kent, R. L., & Moss, S. E. (1994). Effects of sex and gender role on leader emergence. *The Academy of Management Journal*, *37*(5), 1335-1346.

Kimmel, M. S. (2004). *The gendered society* (2$^{nd}$ ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Konrad, A. M., & Pfeffer, J. (1991). Understanding the hiring of women and minorities in educational institutions. *Sociology of Education*, *64*(3), 141-157.

Kulis, S. (1997). Gender segregation among college and university employees. *Sociology and Education*, *70*(2), 151-173.

Laden, B. V. (1996). The role of professional associations in developing academic and administrative leaders. *New Directions for Community Colleges, 95*, 47-58.

Landino, R., & Welch, L. B. (1990). Supporting women in the university environment through collaboration an networking. In L. B. Welch (Ed.), *Women in higher education: Changes and challenges* (pp. 12-19). New York, NY: Praeger.

LeBlanc, D. S. (1993). Barriers to women's advancement into higher education administration. In P. T. Mitchell (Ed.), *Cracking the wall: Women in higher education administration* (pp. 41-49). Washington, DC: The College and University Personnel Association.

Lucas, C. J. (1996). *Crisis in the academy: Rethinking higher education in America*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Lynch, K. K. (1990). Women in school administration: Overcoming the barriers to advancement. *Women's Educational Equity Act Publishing Center Digest*. Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Education, Education Development Center. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 360 753)

Mandel, R. B. (2003). A question about women and the leadership position. In D. L. Rhode (Ed.). *The difference "difference" makes: Women and leadership* (pp. 66-75). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Mark, S. F. (1981). Leadership in higher education: A critical review of sex differences. *Journal of Educational Equity and Leadership*, *1*, 180-200.

Marshall, C. (1979). *Career socialization of women in school administration*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. San Francisco, CA, April, 8-12, 1979. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 170 908)

Marshall, C. (1984). *From culturally defined to self-defined: Career stages of women administrators*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 272 968)

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (1999). *Designing qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Marshall, J. (1994). Why women leave senior management jobs? In M. Tanton (Ed.), *Women in management*: *A developing presence* (pp. 185-201). New York, NY: Routledge.

Marshall, S. (2002). When wonder women hang out in the ivory tower. *Women in Higher Education*, *11*(4), 28.

Martin, J. R. (2000). *Coming of age in academe: Rekindling women's hopes and reforming the academy*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology. (2001). *Statement on gender equity in academic science and engineering*. Retrieved October 9, 2004, from http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2001/print/genderstatement-print.html

McGuire, G. M. (2002). Gender, race, and the shadow structure: A study of informal networks and inequality in a work organization. *Gender and Society*, *16*(3), 303-322.

McKenney, C. B. (2000). Women chief academic officers of public community colleges: Career paths and mobility factors. *(*Doctoral dissertation, Texas Tech University, 2000). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *61,* 02A.: 445.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Milley, J. E. (1991). Women are used to asking: Women presidents as fund raisers. In J. A. Sturnick, J. E. Milley, & C. A. Tisinger (Eds.), *Women at the helm: Pathfinding presidents at state colleges and universities* (pp. 30-36). Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Moore, K. M. (1984). Careers in college and university administration: How are women affected? In A. Tinsley, C. Secor, & S. Kaplan (Eds.), *Women in higher education administration* (pp. 5-15). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Moore, K. M., & Sagaria, M. A. (1986). Women administrators and mobility: The second struggle. In P. A. Farrant (Ed.), *Strategies and attitudes: Women in educational administration* (pp. 28-35). Washington, DC: National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors.

Morris, B. J. (2002). The backlash against women's studies. In J. DiGeorgio-Lutz (Ed.), *Women in higher education: Empowering change* (pp. 161-164). Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

Munford, R., & Rumball, S. (2000). Women in university power structures. In M. Kearney (Ed.), *Women, power and the academy: From rhetoric to reality* (pp. 92-98). Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations Publishing & Berghahn Books.

Murphy, J. G. (1991). Women presidents/chancellors in a rural setting. In J. A. Sturnick, J. E. Milley, & C. A. Tisinger (Eds.), *Women at the helm: Pathfinding presidents at state colleges and universities* (pp. 51-58). Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Murrell, P. H., & Donohue, W. G. (1982). *The life cycles and career stages of senior-level administrative women in higher education*. Memphis State University. Research report sponsored by the National Institute of Education, Washington, DC. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 219 018)

National Organization for Research at the University of Chicago. (2001). *Doctorate recipients from United States universities: Summary report 2001* [Electronic version]. Retrieved January 23, 2004, from http://www.norc.uchicago.edu/issues/sed-2001.pdf

Nelson, D. L., & Burke, R. J. (2000). Women executives: Health, stress, and success. *The Academy of Management Executive, 14(3),* 107-121.

Nickols, F. (2000). *Strategy: Definitions and meaning.* Retrieved August 29, 2004, from http://home.att.net/~nickols/strategy_definition.htm

Nidiffer, J. (2001a). Crumbs from the boy's table: The first century of coeducation. In J. Nidiffer, & C. T. Bashaw (Eds.), *Women administrators in higher education: Historical and contemporary perspectives* (pp. 13-34). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Nidiffer, J. (2001b). New leadership for a new century: Women's contribution to leadership in higher education. In J. Nidiffer, & C. T. Bashaw (Eds.), *Women administrators in higher education: Historical and contemporary perspectives* (pp. 101-131). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Nidiffer, J. (2001c). Advocates on campus: Deans of women create a new profession. In J. Nidiffer, & C. T. Bashaw (Eds.), *Women administrators in higher education: Historical and contemporary perspectives* (pp. 135-156). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Nidiffer, J. (2002). Overview. In A. M. Aleman, & K. A. Renn (Eds.), *Women in higher education: An encyclopedia* (pp. 3-15). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc.

Nidiffer J. (2003). From whence they came: The contexts, challenges, and courage of early women administrators in higher education. In B. Ropers-Huilman (Ed.), *Gendered future in higher education* (pp. 15-34). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

O'Laughlin, E. M., & Bischoff, L. G. (2001). Balancing parenthood and academia: The challenges and contradictions of academic careers [Electronic version]. *Advancing Women in Leadership Journal*, *4*(1). Retrieved June 17, 2002, from http://www.advancingwomen.com/awl/winter2001/bischoff_o'laughlin.html

O'Neil, R. M. (1999). Academic freedom: Past, present, and future. In P. G. Altbach, R. O. Berdahl, & P. J. Gumport (Eds.), *American higher education in the twenty-first century* (pp. 89-108). Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

O'Neill, M. (1994). The paradox of women and power in the nonprofit sector. In T. Odendahl, & M. O'Neill (Eds.), *Women and power in the nonprofit sector* (pp. 1-16). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Patton, K. L. (1990). Women managers in higher education. In L. B. Welch (Ed.), *Women in higher education: Changes and challenges* (pp. 161-172). New York, NY: Praeger.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods (2nd ed.)*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pearson, C. S., Shavlik, D. L., & Touchton, J. G. (1988). *Educating the majority: Women challenge tradition in higher education*. New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Pfeffer, J., & Davisblake, A. (1987). The effect of the proportion of women on salaries: The case of college administrators. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *32*(1), 1-24.

Powell, G. N., & Graves, L. M. (2003). *Women and men in management* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Quina, K., Cotter, M., & Romenesko, K. (1998). Breaking the (plexi-)glass ceiling in higher eduation. In L. H. Collins, J. C. Chrisler, & K. Quina (Eds.), *Career strategies for women in academe: Arming Athena* (pp. 215-245). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rhode, D. L. (1997). *Speaking of sex: The denial of gender inequality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Rhode, D. L. (2003). The difference "difference" makes. In D. L. Rhode (Ed.). *The difference "difference" makes: Women and leadership* (pp. 3-50). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Ronning, A. H. (2000). Gender, culture and power-sharing in academia. In M. Kearney, *Women, power and the academy* (pp. 99-109). Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations Publishing & Berghahn Books.

Ropers-Huilman, B. (1998). *Feminist leaders in higher education: A textual analysis of power and resistance*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association at San Diego, CA, April 13-17, 1998. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 423 729)

Ropers-Huilman, B. (2003). Gender in the future of higher education. In B. Ropers-Huilman (Ed.), *Gendered future in higher education: Critical perspectives for change* (pp. 1-11). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Ropers-Huilman, B., & Shackelford, M. (2003). Negotiating identities and making change: Feminist faculty in higher education. In B. Ropers-Huilman (Ed.), *Gendered future in higher education: Critical perspectives for change* (pp. 135-147). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Ropers-Huilman, B., & Taliaferro, D. (2003). Advocacy education: Teaching, research and difference in higher education. In B. Ropers-Huilman (Ed.), *Gendered future in higher education: Critical perspectives for change* (pp. 151-177). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Rose, S., & Danner, M. J. (1998). Money matters: The art of negotiation for women faculty. In L. H. Collins, J. C. Chrisler, & K. Quina (Eds.), *Career strategies for women in academe: Arming Athena* (pp. 157-186). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rossman, G. B., & Rallis, S. F. (2003). *Learning in the field: An introduction to qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rosynsky, M. O. (2002). The experience of women college presidents: An oral history (Doctoral dissertation, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2002). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *63,* 12A.: 4178.

Rudolph, F. (1968). *The American college and university: A history* (3rd ed.). New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Rusch, E. A., & Marshall, C. (1995). *Gender filters at work in the administrative culture*. A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. San Francisco, CA, April 18-22, 1995. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 392 116)

Russo, P. C. (1986). Impact of power/political behaviors on career advancement of lay women administrators in colleges and universities in New Jersey (Doctoral dissertation, Seton Hall University, 1986). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *48,* 01A.: 0024.

Sagaria, M. A. (1988). Administrative mobility and gender: Patterns and processes in higher education. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *59*(3), 305-326.

Sandler, B. R. (1986). *The campus climate revisited: Chilly for women faculty, administrators, and graduate students*. Washington, DC: Project on the Status and Education of Women, Association of American Colleges.

Sandler, B. R., Silverberg, L. A., & Hall, R. M. (1996). *The chilling classroom climate: A guide to improve the education of women*. Washington, DC: National Association for Women in Education.

Scanlong, K. C. (1997). Mentoring women administrators: Breaking through the glass ceiling. *Initiatives*, *58*, 39-59.

Schmuck, P., Hollingsworth, S., & Lock, R. (2002). Women administrators and the point of exit: Collision between the person and the institution. In C. Reynolds (Ed.), *Women and school leadership: International perspectives* (pp. 93-110). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Schram, T. H. (2003). *Conceptualizing qualitative inquiry: Mindwork for fieldwork in education and the social sciences*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Schreiber, P. J. (1998). Women's career development patterns. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, *80*(5), 5-13.

Schwandt, T. A. (2001). *Dictionary of qualitative inquiry* (2nd rev. ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schwartz, R. A. (1997). How deans of women became men. *Review of Higher Education*, *20*(4), 419-436.

Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Shakeshaft, C. (1999). The struggle to create a more gender-inclusive profession. In J. Murphy, & K. S. Louis (Eds.), *Handbook of research on educational administration: A project of the American Educational Research Association* (pp. 99-118). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Shinn, S. (2002). At the top of her game. Focus: Women in management education [Electronic version]. *BizEd*, July/August, 18-21.

Solomon, B. M. (1985). *In the company of educated women: A history of women and higher education in America*. New Haven, CN: Yale University Press.

Springer, M. (2003). The presidency as journey (not destination) [Electronic version]. *The Presidency*, *6*(1), 24-28.

Stokes, M. J. (1984). *Organizational barriers and their impact on women in higher education* (Research report). Washington, DC: National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 264 747)

Sturnick, J. A. (1991). The second presidency. In J. A. Sturnick, J. E. Milley, & C. A. Tisinger (Eds.), *Women at the helm: Pathfinding presidents at state colleges and universities* (pp. 96-103). Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Sturnick, J. A. (1999). Women who lead: Persevering in the face of skepticism [Electronic version]. *The Presidency*, *2*(2), 28-33.

Swoboda, M., & Vanderbosh, J. (1986). The society of outsiders: Women in administration. In P. A. Farrant (Ed.), *Strategies and attitudes: Women in educational administration* (pp. 1-4). Washington, DC: National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors.

Tedrow, B., & Rhoads, R. A. (1998). *Senior women community college administrators: Life in higher education's inner circle*. Paper presented at the 23rd Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Miami, FL, November 5-8, 1998. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 427 614)

Tedrow, B., & Rhoads, R. A. (1999). A qualitative study of women's experiences in community college leadership positions. *Community College Review, 27*(3), 1-18.

Tennen, D. (1990). *You just don't understand: Women and men in conversation*. New York, NY: William Morrow and Company, Inc.

Thelin, J. R. (2004). *A history of American higher education*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Thompson, C. A., & Beauvais, L. L. (2000). Balancing work/life. In D. M. Smith (Ed.), *Women at work: Leadership for the next century* (pp. 162-189). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Thompson-Stacy, C. (1995). Strategies for overcoming gender bias in higher education: A descriptive study of female higher education administrators in a Midwestern state (Doctoral dissertation, University of Sarasota, 1995). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *57,* 02A.: 605.

Tinsley, A. (1986). Upward mobility for women administrators. In P. A. Farrant (Ed.), *Strategies and attitudes: Women in educational administration* (pp. 5-13). Washington, DC: National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors.

Touchton, J. G., Shavlik, D. L., & Davis, L. (1991). Leadership at the top: Women presidents in public, four-year institutions. In J. A. Sturnick, J. E. Milley, & C. A. Tisinger

(Eds.), *Women at the helm: Pathfinding presidents at state colleges and universities* (pp. 5-15). Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Tuttle, K. N. (2004). *The historical perspective of women administrators in higher education*. Paper presented at the 2004 NASPA Alice Manicur Symposium. Retrieved January 23, 2004, from http://www.naspa.org/prodev/regforms/he04.pdf

Twombly, S. B. (1993). What we know about women in community colleges: An examination of the literature using feminist phase theory. *Journal of Higher Education*, *64*(2), 186-210.

Twombly, S. B. (1999). New scholarship on academic women: Beyond "women's ways." *The Review of Higher Education*, *22*(4), 441-454.

Twombly, S. B., & Rosser, V. J. (2002). Women administrators: Overview. In A. M. Aleman, & K. A. Renn (Eds.), *Women in higher education: An encyclopedia* (pp. 459-466). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics. (2002). *Digest of education statistics*, 2002 [Electronic version]. Retrieved November 04, 2004, from http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003060c.pdf

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics. (2003a). *Digest of education* statistics tables and figures, 2003 [Electronic version]. Retrieved January 22, 2005, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d03/tables/pdf/table227.pdf

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics. (2003b). *Staff in postsecondary institutions, fall 2001, and salaries of full-time instructional faculty*, *2001-02* [Electronic version]. Retrieved November 04, 2004, from http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2004/2004159.pdf

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics. (2004). *Indicator 20: Degrees earned by women* [Electronic version]. Retrieved September 20, 2004, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2004/section3/indicator20.asp

Valian, V. (1998). *Why so slow? The advancement of women*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Villadsen, A. W., & Tack, M. W. (1986). Combining home and career responsibilities: The methods used by women executives in higher education. In P. A. Farrant (Ed.), *Strategies and attitudes: Women in educational administration* (pp. 170-175). Washington, DC: National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors.

Waggoner, F. I. (1998). Leadership skills in the balance. In G. Brown, & B. I. Irby (Eds.), *Women and leadership: Creating balance in life* (pp. 63-82). Commack, NY: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.

Wagner, M. D. (1991). The first women president in the California state university system. In J. A. Sturnick, J. E. Milley, & C. A. Tisinger (Eds.), *Women at the helm: Pathfinding presidents at state colleges and universities* (pp. 5-15). Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Wajcman, J. (1998). *Managing like a man*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Walton, K. D., & McDade, S. A. (2001). At the top of the faculty: Women as chief academic officers. In J. Nidiffer, & C. T. Bashaw (Eds.), *Women administrators in higher education* (pp. 85-100). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Warner, R., & DeFleur, L. B. (1993). Career paths of women in higher education. In P. T. Mitchell (Ed.), *Cracking the wall: Women in higher education administration* (pp. 1-18). Washington, DC: College and University Personnel Association.

Watkins, R. M., Herrin, M., & McDonald, L. R. (1998). The juxtaposition of career and family: A dilemma for professional women [Electronic version]. *Advancing Women in Leadership Journal*, *1*(2). Retrieved March 5, 2004, from http://www.advancingwomen.com/awl/winter98/awlv2_watkins5.html

Weisman, J. (2002). Professional organizations. In A. M. Aleman, & K. A. Renn (Eds.), *Women in higher education: An encyclopedia* (pp. 502-505). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc.

Wheeler, K. J. (1988). Male and female college presidents: Leadership behaviors, attitudes, and demographic characteristics (Doctoral dissertation, Bowling Green State University, 1988). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *50*, 03A.: 0638.

Wheeler, K. J., & Tack, M. W. (1989). *Male and female college presidents: Leadership behaviors and attitudes*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. San Francisco, CA, March 27-31, 1989. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 309 687)

Wilking, K. A. (2001). Asian Pacific American female chief executive officers in higher education: Their challenges and strategies to the top (Doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *62*, 03A.: 875.

Wilmore, E. L. (1998). Creating balance and success in the male world. In G. Brown, & B. I. Irby (Eds.), *Women and leadership: Creating balance in life*, (pp. 37-44). Commack, NY: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.

Witmer, J. T. (1995). *Moving up! A guidebook for women in educational administration*. Lancaster, PA: Technomic.

Wolcott, H. F. (2001). *Writing up qualitative research* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Woody, T. A. (1966). *A history of women's education in the United States* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., vol. 2). New York, NY: Octagon Books.

Yoder, J. D. (1991). Rethinking tokenism: Looking beyond numbers. *Gender and Society*, 5(1), 178-192.

Yoder, J. D. (2001). Making leadership work more effectively for women. *Journal of Social Issues*, *57*(4), 815-828.

Zakery, F. (1991). Administrative advancement of women in higher education institutions in Missouri *(*Doctoral dissertation, University of Missouri-Columbia, 1991). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *53,* 05A.: 1358.

Zanville, R. L. (2001). A quantitative analysis of the personal characteristics and workplace experiences of women and men as professional and community leaders [Electronic version]. *Advancing Women in Leadership Journal*, *4*(1). Retrieved March 5, 2004, from http://www.advancingwomen.com/awl/winter2001/zanville/zanville.html

Zemsky, R. E. (2001). Gender intelligence, *Policy Perspectives*, *10*(2), 1-12. Philadelphia, PA: Knight Higher Education Collaborative, September, 2001. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 455 722)

APPENDIX I:

Permission from the Human Subject Review Committee

February 24, 2005

Ms. Nan-Chi Tiao
Department of Leadership and Counseling

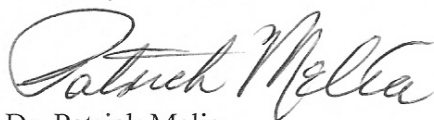RE: *"Senior Women Leaders in Higher Education: Overcoming Barriers to Success"*

The Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Eastern Michigan University
has granted approval to your proposal: "Senior Women Leaders in Higher Education:
Overcoming Barriers to Success".

After careful review of your application, the IRB determined that the rights and welfare
of the individual subjects involved in this research are carefully guarded. Additionally,
the methods used to obtain informed consent are appropriate, and the individuals are not
at a risk.

You are reminded of your obligation to advise the IRB of any change in the protocol that
might alter your research in any manner that differs from that upon which this approval is
based. Approval of this project applies for one year from the date of this letter. If your
data collection continues beyond the one-year period, you must apply for a renewal.

On behalf of the Human Subjects Committee, I wish you success in conducting your
research.

Sincerely,

Dr. Patrick Melia
Administrative Co-Chair
Human Subjects Committee

CC:    Dr. Steve Pernecky, Faculty Co-Chair
       Dr. Martha Tack

APPENDIX II:

Cover Letter to Potential Informants

Dear _____:

As _____ of _____ University, you have made countless contributions to higher education institutions in the United States.  Your "story" must now be preserved because the lessons you have learned along your journey will inspire other women to pursue senior leadership positions and help them to be successful.

As a doctoral candidate in educational leadership at Eastern Michigan University (EMU), I am very interested in understanding how and why women leaders in senior-level positions within academe experience success.  Therefore, the purpose of my dissertation research is twofold: to identify the primary barriers that senior women leaders in 4-year, public, higher education institutions experience and to describe the strategies they use to overcome these barriers and succeed.

Will you now please help me complete my dissertation research by participating in a two-hour, in-depth, personal interview as one of my very carefully selected "subjects?"  Your time is extremely valuable; but we will use it wisely, following the attached Interview Guide as our tentative outline, to gather information that only you can provide based on your experiences, insights, and observations.  Attached also for your review is a copy of the Informed Consent Form.

Having secured the endorsement of _____, I hope you will feel comfortable participating in this pioneering study.  Having the opportunity to interview and learn from you would be an honor for me and also would allow future generations of women to benefit from your wisdom and guidance.

If you have any questions, please contact either my dissertation chair, Dr. Martha W. Tack, Senior Executive for Presidential Initiatives at EMU, at 734.487.2211 or at Martha.Tack@emich.edu or me either at the EMU Department of Leadership and Counseling at 734.487.3249, at home at 734.913.0379, or at nanchitiao@yahoo.com.  I will contact your office within a week to discuss the possibility of scheduling an appointment with you in the near future.

Sincerely,


_____
Nan-Chi Tiao
Doctoral Candidate and Doctoral Fellow

Attachments

APPENDIX III:

Sample Interview Guide

*Senior Women Leaders in Higher Education: Overcoming Barriers to Success*

<u>Introduction</u>

Thank you very much for making this dissertation study possible. As you know, the purpose of this research effort is to obtain a deeper understanding of how senior women leaders have managed to overcome different institutional, family, and personal barriers as they pursue success in higher education administration. You will be invited to reflect on explicit and implicit factors that once hindered or delayed your success in the profession over the years. In addition, please think about how you were able to use different strategies to overcome difficult situations to maintain your success and effectiveness as a leader and what you have learned from these experiences. I hope you will find this interview process reflective and meaningful.

Before the interview begins, please be assured again that your anonymity will be closely guarded at all times. While the interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed verbatim for accuracy, neither your name nor your organizational affiliations will be associated with the tapes, the transcripts, or any reports resulting from this project. All identifying characteristics will be replaced with pseudonyms. The code list and the consent form will be kept under lock and key in the researcher's residence. Upon completion of the study, the researcher will destroy immediately the code list, the consent forms, the transcripts, and the audiotapes.

Please interrupt me during the interview if you need clarification. For questions that are not relevant or make you feel uncomfortable, please feel free to comment briefly or

simply ignore them. You are encouraged to focus on questions that you consider important, meaningful, and interesting to you. Please feel free to add your insights or comments at any time.

Are there any questions that you would like to ask before we begin the formal interview?

A. General

1. Would you please tell me a little bit about yourself?
2. To what would you attribute your obtaining of your current position as a senior leader?
3. Do you think you are as successful and effective as you want to be? Why or why not?

B. Institutional Barriers and Strategies for Success

1. Have you encountered any barriers getting to your present leadership position? If so, what barriers have you experienced? What did you do to overcome them? If not, why not?
2. As you try to lead effectively to maintain your success, what institutional barriers (implicit or explicit) have you encountered? Please identify two to three barriers or obstacles that have hindered or delayed your effectiveness and success.
3. What strategies have you employed to deal with these difficult situations? Did they work? Please explain how and why.
4. What is it like to be a woman in the upper echelon? How well do you think you are accepted and/or included among important social and political groups?
5. What strategies have you utilized to gain acceptance and inclusion with major male and female stakeholders? Have the strategies you used differed based on the gender of the stakeholder?
6. Have you had difficulty getting needed resources or support to get things done effectively? If so, why? What strategies have helped you overcome these barriers to achieve desired goals? If not, why not?

C.  Family and/or Personal Barriers and Strategies for Success

   1.  Have you experienced family and/or personal struggles in your path to success and
       effectiveness as a female administrator? If so, how have these barriers affected you
       personally and professionally? If not, why not?
   2.  What strategies have you developed along the way to handle family and/or personal
       issues?
   3.  If you could change something with your life and your career, what changes would
       you make? Why?

D.  Impact of Gender

   1.  Tell me if you think gender has played any positive or negative role for you in your
       pursuit of career success in higher education administration.
   2.  What do you think are the general advantages and/or disadvantages to being a woman
       in the profession?
   3.  From your perspective, had you been a man, would the institutional, family, and
       personal barriers you just described have been different? If so, how?

E.  Insights/Advice

   1.  What insights have you gained about women in leadership over the years? What
       pitfalls should women avoid and what choices can they have?
   2.  What skills, strategies, or support are most critical if women are to succeed as top-
       level decision makers in academia? How can aspiring women leaders better prepare
       themselves to obtain such skills, strategies, or support?
   3.  What advice would you give to women who want to have both a career in higher
       education administration and a (family) life?


Are there any other questions or comments you would like to add?

Would you mind if I contact you for more information or clarification?

Thank you very much for your participation.

Appendix IV:

Informed Consent Form

I agree to participate in a dissertation research study that focuses on how senior women leaders overcome different barriers to achieve career success in higher education. My participation will include a private two to three hour recorded interview. After conclusions are drawn from the study, I will have a chance to review and confirm the accuracy of findings drawn from my interview. If I find that the results do not reflect accurately my perceptions, the researcher and I will negotiate until agreements are reached.

I understand that no harm or discomfort should occur since my identity will be kept confidential at all times. To ensure confidentiality, all interviews will be coded before the transcription process begins; and all identifying information will be replaced with pseudonyms. The coding list and this consent form will be kept under lock and key at the researcher's residence. Upon completion of the study, the coding list, the consent forms, the transcripts, and all audiotapes will be destroyed immediately.

Through reflections on experiences in my professional life, other highly competent women may be inspired; and deeper understanding of my experiences at work can be obtained. In addition, when the study is completed, I understand that I may request a copy of the findings. I further understand that data collected may be used for presentations and publications but neither my name nor that of my institution will be associated with the presentations or publications.

For questions about this research, please contact Nan-Chi Tiao, Doctoral Fellow, Department of Leadership and Counseling, Eastern Michigan University at (734) 487-3249, or her dissertation chair, Dr. Martha W. Tack, Senior Executive for Presidential Initiatives, Eastern Michigan University, at (734) 487-2211. This research protocol has been reviewed and approved by the Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee. Questions about the approval process can be answered by contacting either Dr. Patrick Melia or Dr. Steven Pernecky at (734) 487-0379.

I confirm that I know the purpose and parameters of the research study outlined above. I am aware that my participation is completely voluntary and that I may withdraw from the project at any time with no complications. I hereby provide consent for the use of my quotations and wish to participate in this research endeavor now.


_____        _____

Name (Print or Type)                                                        Telephone


_____        _____

Signature                                                                          Date

APPENDIX V:

Confidential Demographic Survey

1. Age: _____ 2. Ethnicity: _____

3. Highest Degree Earned: _____ 4. Work Hours per Week: _____

5. Marital Status: _____ 6. Occupation of Spouse if Any: _____

7.  Number/Age of Children: _____ 8.  Your Birth Order: _____

9.  Parents' Highest Educational Levels:

   Father or Male Guardian: _____

   Mother or Female Guardian: _____

10. Number of Years in Current Position: _____

11. Previous Three Administrative Positions, Institution/Organization, and Years of Service

   1) _____

   2) _____

   3) _____

12. Total Number of Years in Higher Education Administration: _____

13. Security of Current Position:

   Tenure-Track: _____   Tenured: _____   At Will: _____

   One-Year, Renewable Contract: _____   Multi-Year Contract: _____

14. Critical Professional/Career Mentoring Experience:

   Position/Title of Mentor(s):_____

   Relationship: _____

   Gender of Mentor(s): _____

APPENDIX VI:

Thank You Letter and Request for Internal Validity Check

Dear _____,

Because of your involvement in my dissertation research, I will be a more effective leader in higher education as will others who carefully consider the resulting research findings. Based on the content of your rich stories, I believe the research findings will inspire more women to choose higher education leadership as a profession; moreover, hopefully, more effective senior-level women leaders will choose to remain in place for longer periods of time.

Attached for your review are the following two files: 1) a personal profile written using pseudonyms to disguise your identity; and 2) emergent themes from my dissertation research on senior women leaders in higher education. Please read these two documents and let me know by [Month, Date] if changes are necessary. As you know, protecting your anonymity and respecting your responses are my duties as a researcher. Therefore, should you have any concerns or wish to make any changes in the narratives, please do not hesitate to contact me through email at nanchitaio@yahoo.com or by telephone at _____, my home telephone number.

If I do not hear from you by [Month, Date], I will assume that you approve the narratives as I have distributed them to you. Naturally, if you wish to share any further comments or afterthoughts with me, please feel free to do so.

Once again, from the bottom of my heart, thank you for giving me this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to learn so much from you.

With best wishes,


_____
Nan-Chi Tiao
Doctoral Candidate
Department of Leadership and Counseling
Eastern Michigan University

APPENDIX VII:

Sources for Personal Barriers to Success

| Types of Personal Barriers | Sources |
| --- | --- |
| Psychological Barriers | |
| 1. Lack of aspiration or confidence, and self-limitation | Dickerson & Taylor, 2000; Harter, 1993; LeBlanc, 1993; Marshall, 1984; Witmer, 1995 |
| 2. Fear of failure or success | Cline, 1996; Flanagan, 2002; Witmer, 1995 |
| 3. Loneliness and isolation | Die, 1999; Dietz, 1997; LeBlanc, 1993 |
| Familial Barriers | |
| 1. Family constraints or balancing between family and work | Clark & Caffarella, 1999; Gupton & Slick, 1996; Harris, Lowery, & Arnold, 2002; Hensel, 1991; Jones, 1993; LeBlanc, 1993; Mark, 1981; O'Laughlin & Bischoff, 2001; Rosynsky, 2002; Thompson & Beauvais, 2000; Valladsen & Tack, 1986; Wilking, 2001; Zakery, 1991 |
| 2. Multiple roles or conflicting roles | Mark, 1981; Marshall, 1984; Sandler, 1986 |
| 3. Geographic immobility | Patton, 1990; Watkins, Herrin, & McDonald, 1998 |
| 4. Lack of support from spouse | Brown, Van Ummersen, & Sturnick, 2001; Mark, 1981; Sturnick, Milley, & Tisinger, 1991 |

APPENDIX: VIII

Sources for Professional Barriers to Success

| Professional Barriers | Sources |
|---|---|
| **Structural Barriers** | |
| 1. Hiring and salary gap | Chliwniak, 1997; Euben, 2001; Hensel, 1991; Konrad & Pfeffer, 1991; Pfeffer & Davisblake, 1987; Shakeshaft, 1999; Thompson-Stacy, 1995 |
| 2. Lack of role models, and mentors | Benokraitis, 1998; Bower, 1993; Dietz, 1997; Johnsrud, 1991; LeBlanc, 1993; Munford & Rumball, 2000; Sandler, 1996; Zakery, 1991 |
| 3. Unequal job assignments and marginalization | Chamberlain, 1988; Cook, 2001; Johnsrud & Heck, 1994; Johnsrud, 1991; Konrad and Pfeffer, 1991; Kulis, 1997; Moore & Sagaria, 1984; Tinsley 1986; Walton & McDade, 2001 |
| **Cultural Barriers** | |
| 1. Conflicts between gender and leader expectations | Curry, 2000; Gupton & Slick, 1996; Guteck, 2001; Growe & Montgomery, 1999; Jablonski, 1996; Sandler, 1986; Sturnick, 1999; Tedrow & Rhoads, 1998; Yoder, 2001; Zakery, 1991 |
| 2. Gender stereotypes | Carli & Eagly, 2001; Gupton & Slick, 1996; Guteck, 2001; Kearney, 2000; Kent & Moss, 1994; Marshall, 1984; Rhode, 2003; Shakeshaft, 1999; Sturnick, 1999; Wilkings 2001 |
| 3. Negative attitudes toward women as leaders and inhospitable climate | Bond, 2000; Carli, 1998; Cline, 1996; Currie & Thiele, 2001; Dietz, 1998; English, 2000; Kearney, 2000; Ronning, 2000; Rusch & Marshall, 1995; Sandler, 1986; Sandler, Silverberg, & Hall, 1996; Stokes, 1984; Swoboda & Vanderbosh, 1986; Wheeler & Tack, 1989; Zakery, 1991 |
| 4. Role conflicts and double bind | Cline,1996; Curry, 2000; Harris, Lowery, & Arnold, 2002; Hensel, 1991; Jones, 1993; Kent & Moss, 1994; Mark, 1981; Sturnick, 1991; Tedrow & Rhoads, 1998 |
| **Political Barriers** | |
| 1. Exclusion from the old boys network | Chliwniak, 1997; Dietz, 1997; Harter, 1993; Hensel, 1991; Kanter, 1993; Kearney, 2000; McGuire, 2002; Mandel, 2003; Marshall, 1979; Stokes, 1984; Zakery, 1991 |
| 2. Lack of recognition | Collins, 1998; Shakeshaft, 1999; Stokes, 1984; Sturnick, 1999 |
| Demeaning, devaluation, or inappropriate jokes | Carli & Eagly, 2001; Collins, 1998; Park, 1996; Stokes, 1984; Thompson-Stacy 1995; Valian, 1998; Wheeler & Tack, 1989 |
| 3. Workplace politics, lack of access to power and resources | Bolman & Deal, 1992; Cline, 1996; English, 2000; Harrow, 1993; LeBlanc, 1993; Munford & Rumball, 2000; Ronning, 2000; Stokes, 1984 |