

Dean James Bond

*Philip M. Phibbs**

When I interviewed Jim Bond as a candidate for the position of Dean of the law school at the University of Puget Sound in the 1980s, I was stunned by my decision to hire him.

My first question in the interview was: “Have you ever been the Dean of a law school?” He replied, “No.” Then I asked, hopefully, “Have you ever served in some capacity in the administration of a law school?” The answer was again: “No.” My third, rather desperate, question was: “What has been your experience in fundraising?” To which he responded, embarrassingly but honestly, “I have had none.”

I wondered what to do. I had liked him from the moment he walked through the door; he seemed direct, quietly self-assured, and comfortable with himself, and I felt comfortable with him. My gut told me that we could work together easily and, more importantly, we could be friends. That was important to me, so I shifted the conversation away from his background and to our possible future as a team to see if my sense of our potential working relationship was likely to be as I assumed.

The conversation that followed was very encouraging, and Jim inadvertently confirmed my assumption when the interview was concluding. He said, “May I ask you one question?” When I assented, he said, “Could you loan me five dollars? When I left home this morning, I forgot to take my billfold, and I need some money to get from the airport to home.”

As I handed over the money, I thought, “At least he should be a great fundraiser.” In fact, he was, and he was also a great Dean at the University of Puget Sound (and later at Seattle University), a wonderful colleague, and above all, my great friend. When interviewing, “trust your gut”!

* Former President of University of Puget Sound.