

Stabilizing Leadership in Times of Change

FOLLOWING A LONG-TIME HEAD

Session Outline

- A model for leadership transition using strategic planning elements combined with strategic communications tools
- Top 10 strategic communication messages in times of change

Top 10 information needs in times of change

1. Why change
2. What will happen if we don't change
3. What will it be like to change
4. What will change
5. What will not change
6. Who will lead the change
7. How will we manage the change
8. When will the change occur
9. What will be expected of me... What will happen to me if I don't participate in the change...What are my rewards if I do
10. How does the change affect me and my ability to do my job and maintain my relationships



Common Themes

Strategic Planning

1. Values and mission
2. Issues and assumptions
3. Vision and goals
4. Strategies and tactics
5. Performance measures

Transition Planning

1. Why change?
2. What will happen if we don't change?
3. What will it be like to change?
4. What will change?
5. What will not change?
6. Who will lead the change?
7. How will we manage the change?
8. When will the change occur?
9. What will be expected of me? What will happen to me if I don't participate in the change? What are my rewards if I do?
10. How does the change affect me and my ability to do my job and maintain my relationships?

Strategic Model for Head Transitions



Strategic Influencer: Board

Goal

- To set the tone for transition and inspire confidence in institutional direction and continuity

Strategic Emphases

- Board engagement
- Board self- assessment
- Institutional stability and continuity
- Strategic direction
- Balanced celebration of outgoing leadership
- School strengths and ongoing vitality

Tactical Implementation

"These are the circumstances of the transition..."
"This is our transition team..."
"This is our transition plan..."
"Here is how we will find a new leader and this is our timing..."
After a successful search
"We are ready and able to support the new leader..."
"We unconditionally support the new leader..."
"We will retain and support what is precious about our institution while being open to new ideas and directions..."
To donors and other influential supporters : "The transition should have no negative impact on unfinished projects..."

Strategic Influencer: New Leader

Goal

- To establish the leader's brand and the value-added it creates

Strategic Emphases

- Core values
- Mission
- Vision
- Goals
- Expectations
- Priorities
- Accessibility

Tactical Implementation

- "This is who I am..."
- "This is what care about..."
- "These are my priorities..."
- "This is my timeline..."
- "These are my expectations..."
- "This is where you fit in..."
- "These are the ways I will keep you informed..."
- "These are the feedback loops I have put in place because I want to hear from you..."
- "The tasks of transition will not eclipse person-to-person relationships..."

Strategic Influencer: Transition Messages

Goal

- To inform, neutralize negative opinion, establish relevancy, garner support

Strategic Emphases

- Who
- What
- When
- Where
- Why
- How

Tactical Implementation

- “This is what will change and why...”
- “This is what will *not* change...”
- “This is how and when change will occur...”
- “This is who will lead the change...”
- “This is how the change will affect you and your ability to perform your job...”
- “These are the benefits of participating in the change and the risks of not...”

Strategic Influencer:

Vision

Goal

- To inspire buy-in and participation necessary for a successful transition to new leadership

Strategic Emphases

- Shift focus from what and how to results
- Expected outcomes, benefits, and relevance of a successful transition

Tactical Implementation

- “This is what a successful leadership transition will look like and mean to our school..”
- “This is what a successful leadership transition will mean to you..”
- “This is how you can make a difference in achieving this vision..”

Strategic choices in times of leadership transition

- Board as a strategic influencer

Goal: to set the tone for transition and inspire confidence in institutional direction

- Board and Board chair's specific challenges, actions and messages...

Tactical Implementation

"These are the circumstances of the transition..."

"This is our transition team..."

"This is our transition plan..."

"Here is how we will find a new leader and this is our timing..."

After a successful search

"We are ready and able to support the new leader..."

"We unconditionally support the new leader..."

"We will retain and support what is precious about our institution while being open to new ideas and directions..."

To donors and other influential supporters : "The transition should have no negative impact on unfinished projects..."

Strategic choices in times of leadership transition

Tactical Implementation

“This is what will change and why...”

“This is what will *not* change...”

“This is how and when change will occur...”

“This is who will lead the change...”

“This is how the change will affect you and your ability to perform your job...”

“These are the benefits of participating in the change and the risks of not...”

- Transition messages as a strategic influencer

Goal: to inform, neutralize negative opinion, establish relevancy, garner support

- Board’s and new head’s specific challenges, actions and messages...

Strategic fears and actions in times of leadership transition

Tactical Implementation

"This is who I am..."

"This is what care about..."

"These are my priorities..."

"This is my timeline..."

"These are my expectations..."

"This is where you fit in..."

"These are the ways I will keep you informed..."

"These are the feedback loops I have put in place because I want to hear from you..."

"The tasks of transition will not eclipse person-to-person relationships..."

- New leader as a strategic influencer

Goal: to establish the leader's brand and the value-added it creates

- Determine new head's specific challenges, actions and messages

Strategic team partnership

Tactical Implementation

“This is what a successful leadership transition will look like and mean to our school...”

“This is what a successful leadership transition will mean to you...”

“This is how you can make a difference in achieving this vision...”

- Vision messages as a strategic influencer

Goal: to inspire buy-in and participation necessary for a successful transition to new leadership

- Determine Board's and new head's specific actions and messages...



In conclusion

Strategic Influencers

- Board
- New leader
- Transition messages
- Vision messages

Strategic Outcomes

- Confidence and continuity
- Awareness and appreciation
- Positivism and relevancy
- Buy-in and participation

Sustainability Outcome

Campus constituencies participating in co-creating successful leadership transition and change