

# Leadership Excellence in Higher Education: Present and future

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## ABSTRACT

Universities and colleges are expected not only to create knowledge, improve equity, and respond to student needs, but to do so more efficiently and effectively. Hence, to capture the advantage of this more central focus and role, institutions of higher education need to transform their structures, missions, leadership, and processes and programs in order to be more flexible and more responsive to changing social needs. Pivotal to institutional success in achieving this transformation is effective leadership, a critical factor in sustaining and improving universities' quality and performance. This paper, therefore, examines whether the leaders of higher education are indeed taking the path to success and whether, in doing so, they are implementing a transformational or transactional leadership style. Specifically, this paper aims to systematically review the key findings in the existing literature investigating the styles of and approaches to leadership behaviors that are associated with effectiveness in higher education. The discussion includes a synthesis of the theoretical literature on leadership in higher education and concludes with an overview of potential strategies for educational leaders.

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## Introduction and Objectives

Colleges and universities are significant as places that prepare individuals for their occupational and other roles in society, as well as for personal and societal advancement. Education is necessary as both a personal and societal good. These educational institutions, however, which range from public or private research universities to community and junior colleges, are characterized by leadership that is highly diverse, not only at the level of the presidency and administration, but also among faculty, students, and staff. At the same time, the governance of these organisations is also distinctive, occurring along two different tracks: one overseen by trustees, the other by the faculty. For the latter, charged with the responsibility for courses, graduation requirements, and the granting of other certifications, defining successful leadership involves examining such measures as student enrollments, tuition, graduation rates, student-faculty ratios, faculty productivity and grant support, faculty tenure and promotion, accreditation, and funding. Leadership in such a complex environment is made even more demanding by the need to balance the interests of complex constituencies; not only students, faculty, and staff, but also alumni and external accreditation bodies.

As the pace of change in higher education continues to accelerate, the challenges are becoming increasingly complex; current and future leaders must deal with the changing demands of multiple stakeholders, increasing regulation, a skeptical public, stiffening competition, new technologies and ways of delivering education, and revenue streams that are drying up. Over the past few years, state universities, in particular, have been on the receiving end of significant legislative budget cuts, yet the tuition increases implemented to make up for lost revenue have elicited loud objections from parents, students, and state legislators. Even private universities are experiencing tuition fatigue on the part of often quite wealthy parents. To make matters worse, traditional universities are now competing with, and often being outflanked by, for-profit upstarts like the University of Phoenix and Cappella University, to name but a few. As a result, higher education around the world, which continues to grow rapidly and is seen as vital to economic success, is under great pressure to change. Today's universities and other institutions are expected not only to create knowledge, improve equity, and respond to student needs but to do so much more efficiently. At the same time, they must increasingly compete for students, research funds, and academic staff both with the private sector and across the globe. In this more complex environment direct management by governments is no longer appropriate. Rather, as outlined in this paper, educational leadership must play a major role in creating vision, communicating policy, and deploying strategy throughout the higher education establishment.

This paper is comprised of four sections. Following this introduction are the discussions on the challenges of higher education leadership and the construction of dimensions of leadership excellence in higher education respectively. The next section discusses the leadership styles and their application to higher education. The paper concludes with the strategies for successful leadership in higher education.

## **Challenges of Higher Education Leadership**

The challenges facing higher education leaders are arguably among the most daunting anywhere. Presidents, provosts, deans and others in leadership roles in colleges and universities have to take account of national challenges, local and institutional goals and priorities, and a diverse and often seemingly irreconcilable array of stakeholder expectations, as well as the demands and wishes of bright and independent colleagues. Not only must they do so with limited resources, they often have few incentives to encourage new initiatives or foster significant change.

Another significant challenge lies in the fact that those who come to leadership and governance positions from faculty or professional positions have often had little formalized preparation for those roles as part of their education (Hecht, 2006; Ruben, 2004, 2006; Wolverson & Gmelch, 2002). That is, education, although it encourages independent thinking and problem solving and places great value on providing answers and articulating and defending a viewpoint effectively does not provide the additional talents needed by an organizational leader; namely, skills in creating consensus on priorities, a facility for consultation in thought and action, and the ability to defer or sublimate one's own point of view. In such roles, facilitating and coordinating the contributions of others is critical, as is becoming a student of organizational politics and the economics of higher education. Thus, a successful leader must learn to focus his or her efforts on promoting the personal and professional recognition of others' accomplishments, as well as the achievements of the institution, over his or her own achievements.

How, then, can a college president, provost, or dean truly lead in an era such as ours when old approaches and styles do not seem to work? For today's educational leaders, the requirement is to develop a completely new model of leadership, one that borrows from the technology industry. *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, for example, quotes Amazon founder Jeff Bezos' remark that today's leaders must "think of themselves not as a designer but a gardener." He is, of course, referring to corporate leadership, but his advice applies equally to higher education, which is and always has been filled with visionary leaders. Everyone considered for a deanship or higher has been asked to describe his/her vision. Strong-willed personalities have been prized and rewarded. Decisive, gut-level decision-making has been the norm. Nonetheless, asks Richard Greenwald (2012), might not this new era of higher education – one with limited resources, a wary public, and low morale – require a new style of university leadership? For even though our challenges are many, might they not provide opportunities for those small enough to see them and nimble enough to seize them? In fact, some institutions are plotting right now how to move forward even though, regrettably, too many are simply petrified by fear or stagnant because of tradition and unable to move decisively. Like the proverbial ostrich with its head in the sand, they refuse to see reality and hope the danger will soon pass.

Universities and colleges are in fact "up for grabs," a situation that might just prove valuable. Mark Taylor, for instance, questions the use of departments and disciplines. Andrew Hacker questions the value of tenure. Andrew Del Banco tries very hard to remind us of our values, while Ellen Schrecker reminds us that we have lost our soul. No one strong central leader is going to change this landscape for any college or university, so we cannot and should not be waiting for some superman/superwoman to lead the cause. Rather, as a leadership style based more on gardening than a warrior ethos, Friedman suggests that what higher education needs is the new model adopted by corporate America, which is evidenced by the rising tech giants. The gardeners in this model, although they must know when and what to plant do not control growth; they must guard against the wind, sun, and lack of water, among other forces. They must also know their growing cycle and what can grow in their soil because every plot of land is slightly different from another. Just like a college, no two plots are alike. Analogously, university leaders must prune the dying parts to allow the young, growing buds to thrive. They must graft thriving parts onto sick parts to revive them while still taking care not to kill both in the process. They must know how and when to harvest, and when to let things grow. Harvesting too soon might ultimately kill the crop.

## **University Leadership**

The literature suggests that it has been difficult to construct a description of university and college leadership that goes beyond the common heuristics grounded in everyday practice. We still know fairly little about the leadership in higher education institutions and the ways in which university/college leaders develop and sustain the conditions and processes that improve these organizations. Nonetheless, several contemporary studies have provided evidence that the understanding of leadership in academic institutions, at least among scholars, may be undergoing a paradigmatic shift, from a rational perspective towards a cultural and symbolic one (Dinham, 2005; Early & Weindling, 2004; Eddy, 2003; Heikkila & Lonka, 2006; Nahavandi, 2009).

Without doubt, the key to being an effective leader is an ability to connect with others in the organization and gain their cooperation in working collaboratively towards the organizational goals and objectives. Such leadership, the literature suggests, can play a highly significant role in improving institutional effectiveness. Yet according to the majority of studies on leadership and management in higher education, it currently tends to be widely distributed rather than distributed evenly across the institution (Knight & Trowler, 2001; Middlehurst, 1993).

Several researchers (Bijandi et al., 2011; Czaja, Prouty & Lowe, 1998; Heikkila & Lonka, 2006; Shellard, 2003) have attempted to explain that the dynamic educational leader of today is responsible for more than meeting expected standards. As educational leaders, the president, provost, and dean are accountable for ensuring that effective teaching and learning occur within a learning community. To ensure this happens, however, the dynamic educational leader must possess the skills and knowledge that support the evolution and growth of a higher education community. For educational leaders to be dynamic, they must be able to support and implement change that enhances the institution's effectiveness and has ongoing benefits for the students (Lieberman & Miller 1999). Hence, some researchers have argued that dynamic educational leaders must ensure that there is a structure in place that allows productive organizational change to occur (Dimmock, 1996; Tomlinson & Allan, 2000) – one that involves the engagement of students, faculty, staff, and parents within that community (Lambert, 1998).

Judging from the available evidence, there is no simple formula for achieving excellence in higher education leadership. Nonetheless, the literature does identify several dimensions of leadership excellence that can be summarized as follows (See Table 1).

One of the most crucial tenets of leadership is that leaders are most effective when they are personally and visibly engaged in their work in a manner that, through their words and actions, demonstrates their commitment to the organizational values and guiding principles. Thus, through their behaviors, leaders have the opportunity to reaffirm and reinforce the importance of listening to and understanding the perspectives of those served by the organization, engaging and valuing colleagues at all levels, promoting an open and constructive exchange of viewpoints, and encouraging collaborative leadership and accountability throughout the organization. The additional factors of personal involvement, communication, and consensus building, which are important in all organizations, are particularly crucial in higher education because of the range of challenges to be addressed, the traditions of shared governance, and the limited number of incentives and rewards that most leaders have available to encourage change.

**Table 1: Major Dimensions of Leadership Excellence**

Dimensions	Authors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing a shared commitment to the organization's purposes, needs, and aspirations and maintaining a focus on strategic goals and directions to achieve those ends.</li> </ul>	Benoit & Graham (2005); Bland et al. (2005a); Panagopoulos & Avlonitis (2010); Rafferty & Griffin (2004); Waltman et al. (2004); Weber-Main et al. (2005)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning about and educating colleagues about opportunities and environmental challenges facing higher education in general, and the institution, school or program specifically.</li> </ul>	Boyet (1996); Cameron & Tschirhart (1992); Conger & Kanungo (1994); Michael et al. (2001);
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging and motivating colleagues at all levels to contribute to the best of their capabilities.</li> </ul>	Bass & Avolio (1995); Eckel & Kezar (2003a); Shamir et al. (1998)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing an integrative system of leadership and governance to encourage effective and coordinated leadership throughout the organization.</li> </ul>	Kezar & Eckel (2002a); Kearney & Gebert (2009); Rafferty & Griffin (2004); Schippers et al. (2008)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being a strong advocate for listening to the voices of individuals, groups, and organizations that are the potential beneficiaries of the institution's work and encouraging colleagues to do likewise.</li> </ul>	Ambrose et al. (2005); Benoit & Graham (2005); Bland et al. (2005b); Shamir et al. (1998)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting teamwork, collaborative problem solving, and a sense of community.</li> </ul>	Jung & Avolio (1998); Kearney & Gebert (2009); Liu & Phillips (2011); Shin & Zhou (2007); Wang & Zhu (2011)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraging and supporting leadership and professional development and recognizing the values of personal and organizational learning.</li> </ul>	Rafferty & Griffin (2004); Liaw et al. (2010); Shamir et al. (1998)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fostering a culture in which ongoing assessment and improvement, as well as fact-based decision making, resource allocation, and planning are accepted practices.</li> </ul>	Conger & Kanungo (1994); Groves (2005); Michaelis, Stegmaier & Sonntag (2009)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting accountability through the establishment of clear goals and systematic assessment of outcomes.</li> </ul>	Bono & Judge (2003); Charbonnier-Voirin et al. (2010); Colbert et al. (2008); Podsakoff et al. (1990)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accepting and promoting high standards of integrity and ethical and social responsibility.</li> </ul>	Ambrose et al. (2005); Harris et al. (2004)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viewing change as a positive and necessary component of organizational excellence.</li> </ul>	Eckel & Kezar (2003a; 2003b); Michaelis et al. (2009); Neubert & Yi (2007); Wu et al. (1994)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively representing the university, school or program with external groups and organizations.</li> </ul>	Benoit & Graham (2005); Bland et al. (2005a); Harris et al. (2004); Trocchia & Andrus (2003)

## Leadership Styles and Their Application to Higher Education

Historically, organizations have been viewed as learning systems in which success depends on the ability of leaders to become direction givers and on the organization's capacity for continuous learning (Garrat, 1987). Different individuals, however, employ different leadership styles; that is, different manners of and approaches to providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people. The different styles of leadership are generally conceptualized using adjectives such as authoritarian or autocratic, participative or democratic, delegative or free reign, and most particularly, transformational versus transactional leadership.

Transformational leaders tend to have the attributes to learn across their specialist discipline. They are, however, usually at the top of their functional specialty and thus have a limited perspective for seeing the need for change and the possible consequences of continuing the same practices. Being in such a conflicting role does not readily facilitate the adoption of the transformational leadership approach extolled by many leadership researchers (see Table 2), including those concerned with leadership in higher education.

**Table 2: Transformational and Transactional Leadership**

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Bernard Bass' (1985) interpretation of Burns' (1978) distinction between transformational and transactional leadership has undergone several reconceptualizations. The most prominent version, used in Brown and Moshave (2002) distinguishes between the following:

**Transformational leadership tends to be made up of:**

- Idealized influence: Sharing risks with followers and being consistent in dealings with them.
- Inspirational motivation: Providing meaning and challenge to followers; being enthusiastic; arousing commitment to future states.
- Intellectual stimulation: Stimulating innovation and creativity; encouraging new ways of dealing with work.
- Individualized consideration: Paying close attention to followers' needs; encouraging potential; recognizing personal differences.

**Transactional leadership comprises:**

- Contingent reward: Rewarding followers for successfully completing assignments.
- Management by exception (active and passive): Either actively monitoring departures from procedure and errors among followers and taking appropriate action or passively waiting for departures from procedure and errors and then taking action.

Adapted from Bass et al., (2003)

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Although representatives serving in any capacity that can influence change show traits of quality leadership in every functional activity, quality leadership is demonstrated when effective results are recognized and realized. The traits that define such effective leadership can be categorized as either group or individual (see Table 3): group traits include collaboration, shared purpose, disagreement with respect, division of labor, and a learning environment; individual traits consist of self-knowledge, authenticity/integrity, commitment, empathy/understanding others, and competence (Astin & Astin, 2000; Basham, 2010).

**Table 3: Leadership Excellence Qualities**

<b>Group Qualities</b>	<b>Individual Qualities</b>
<i>Shared purposes</i> – reflects the shared aims and values of the group’s members; can take time to achieve.	<i>Commitment</i> – the passion, intensity, and persistence that supplies energy, motivates individuals, and drives group effort.
<i>Collaboration</i> – an approach that empowers individuals, engenders trust, and capitalizes on diverse talents.	<i>Empathy</i> – the capacity to put oneself in another’s place; requires the cultivation and use of listening skills.
<i>Division of labor</i> – requires each member of the group to make a significant contribution to the overall effort.	<i>Competence</i> – the knowledge, skill and technical expertise required for successful completion of the transformation effort.
<i>Disagreement with respect</i> – recognizes that disagreements are inevitable and should be handled in an atmosphere of mutual trust.	<i>Authenticity</i> – consistency between one’s actions and one’s most deeply felt values and beliefs.
<i>A learning environment</i> – allows members to see the group as a place in which they can learn and acquire skills.	<i>Self-knowledge</i> – awareness of the beliefs, values, attitudes, and emotions that motivate one to seek change.

Source: Astin & Astin (2000) and Basham (2010)

### **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership is the current focus of concepts relating to organizational leadership, concepts based on vision statements that provide the directional path for an organization. The vision statement should also be supplemented with a mission statement that energizes and inspires all members of the organization as they pursue reachable organizational objectives. The transformational leaders that develop and communicate a vision and a sense of strategy are those who “find clear and workable ways to overcome obstacles, are concerned about the qualities of the services their organization provide, and inspire other members to do likewise” (Swail, 2003, p. 14). Hence, transformational leaders encourage development and change and transformational leadership is value driven. Accordingly, the leader sets high standards and purposes for followers, engaging them through inspiration, exemplary practices, collaboration, and trust. Thus, transformational leadership aims at responding to change quickly and at bringing out the best in people. Such leadership, being change oriented, is central to the development and survival of organizations in times of environmental turmoil, when strategic changes must be made to deal with both threats and opportunities. It derives its power from shared principles, norms, and values. Leaders who encourage and support transformation and share power are willing to learn from others and equate individuals’ need for achievement with their need for growth (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Caldwell & Spinks, 1999; Carlson & Perrew, 1995; Gous, 2003; Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). In higher education, such transformational leadership may be necessary to accomplishing the adaption needed to meet the constantly changing external and internal environment. One key factor in this change is the introduction of entrepreneurialism into the public sector, an attempt by institutions of higher education to adapt to the economic and organizational shifts in their environment. This point is underscored by the declining support over the last two decades from higher education’s traditional sources of funding. As a result, major goals have been developed for the short term, and the day-to-day focus has shifted from student learning to an environment of institutional business development.

Another aspect of leadership style is that leaders exercise their power in different ways based on their personality or organizational context. According to the literature, such differences in leadership style – for example, leaning towards autocratic or laissez-faire leadership – are not only better suited to particular organizational environments but can have a significant effect on organizational profitability (Graves, 1986; Rotemberg & Saloner, 1993). Nelson (2003), for example, measures leadership styles along four dimensions: trustee, adapter, collaborator, and entrepreneur (see Table 4).

**Table 4: Description of Leadership Dimensions**

<b>Leadership Dimension</b>	<b>Description of Preferences</b>
Trustee	Preference for using regulations and rules to guide open-ended decisions; preference for clearly defined goals and procedures in working on tasks; tendency to approach interpersonal relationships with logical reasoning rather than subjectivity.
Adapter	Awareness of many political interests in decisions; preference for using bargaining and compromise to decide how work is to be accomplished; tendency to be means-oriented in developing interpersonal relationships; tendency to base decisions on contingent considerations.
Collaborator	Comfort with complex decisions; preference or tendency to work toward consensus; tendency to be concerned with “people” in forming interpersonal relationships; tendency to base decisions on intuitive assessment of what will produce decision benefitting all.
Entrepreneur	Tendency to think of the “big picture” and prefer strategic decisions; tendency to take calculated risks and focus energies on high-value terminal goals; tendency to use innovation and intuition in creating tasks and interpersonal relationships.

### **Transactional Leadership**

Transactional leadership is characterized particularly by contingent rewards, exchanges between leaders and subordinates, in which effort by subordinates is exchanged for specific rewards (i.e., salary, bonuses or other incentives) and management by exception, oversight that involves corrective criticism, negative feedback, and/or negative reinforcement. The former is typified by a job description that becomes an understanding between the leader and subordinates and stipulates both the job to be executed and the benefits the employee will receive in the performance of those duties. The commonest form of management by exception is job performance evaluation followed by proposals for corrective measures, the prevention of an occurrence of something unwanted, or the desiring of different actions in the performance of the job (Basham, 2010; Connor, 2004).

Transactional leaders, therefore, control by their interest in and need for output, which they use to maintain the status quo. When practicing management by exception in their interactions with subordinates, transactional leaders demonstrate the passivity present when employees are not recognized for their contribution to the organization but instead become the focal point of attention when a problem presents. Hence, transactional leaders provide clear goals and objectives with a short-term scope and have no major interest in changing the environment or culture except when or where problems occur. Because this type of leader, clearly and specifically outlines what is required and expected from subordinates, the subordinates usually share a common understanding



of goals and expectations. The environment is, thus, highly structured, with an emphasis on a managing authority. Such structure, however, creates a culture of non-creativity and a lack of creative expansion in the organization due to the assumption that people are largely motivated by simple rewards for specific job performance. In many cases, an accompanying outcome is a lack of improvement in job satisfaction, which stems from a major shortcoming of this approach; namely, its failure to take into account employees' desire for self-actualization (Dollak, 2008).

In sum, transactional leaders draw authority from established power relationships, making their management style characterizable as status quo leadership. Transformational leadership, in contrast, is a leadership of change – change within the leaders themselves, within their subordinates, and within the organization of which they are a part. Likewise, whereas transactional leaders, to be effective, must be able to realize and respond to subordinates' changing needs (because they provide subordinates with something they want in return for something the leaders seek), effective transactional leadership draws from deeply personal value systems. More specifically, transformational leaders bring followers together to pursue collective ambitions by expressing and disseminating their personal standards. Hence, although transactional leadership can certainly bring about constructive outcomes within an organization, transformational leadership aims to promote performance beyond expectations by drawing on charisma, on consideration, and on stimulation.

### **Strategies for Successful Leadership in Higher Education**

The distinction between transactional and transformational leadership practices and concepts in higher education may not be as clear as traditionally believed. The situation and environment in public funding to higher education will require critical application of transactional and transformational leadership practices and concepts to ensure that an institution of higher education succeeds in its purpose of learning. A higher educational institution's leaders' competency in knowledge, leadership skills, and technical expertise is necessary to ensure the successful completion of a transformation effort.

The major challenge facing higher education today is leadership; navigating the complex educational environment requires innovative, flexible, and bold leadership qualities. Nonetheless, in any business setting, "leadership" has become one of those oft-cited terms, whose true meaning has been obscured by its use to identify, lay blame for, solve, and even create problems. In higher education the term has become even more ambiguous as we grapple with changing student demographics, new regulatory requirements, globalization, and technology that challenge the very core philosophy of higher education. Hence, for a successful future, higher education must address the following leadership challenges and qualities:

1. Because of the dynamic environment, the vision, mission, and core values of many higher education institutions are fluid and under continuous challenge. Therefore, today's leaders must be skilled in not only motivating change, but also eloquently articulating it for diverse audiences. Doing so successfully, however, requires that leaders have an authentic and consistent relationship with stakeholders, with whom they must hold an ongoing, collaborative, and participative dialogue. This dictum, although in a sense it may seem like old news, must be

applied in a new context. That is, although colleges and universities are very traditional, the world and its values are changing constantly. How a leader manages the juxtaposition of tradition against the backdrop of change is, therefore, critical.

2. Many structures have emerged within higher education for standardizing conceptualization, governance, measurement, and assessment. Today's leaders must thus maintain a focus on creativity, which, together with innovation, is the foundation of both higher education and entrepreneurship and economic vitality. Maintaining such a focus means confronting tradition, while still preserving the synergetic connections between knowledge, experience, creativity, and careers.
3. Education for education's sake is becoming an antiquated concept; students want a job, and higher education must deliver it. Therefore, today's leaders must be willing to challenge traditional notions of higher education and explore an ideological shift in its purpose and value proposition. Leaders must also focus on the interdisciplinary nature of learning and create integrated, authentic learning experiences that are broad in both scope and skills. A higher education that equips individuals with a well-rounded mind does not preclude training them for a successful career. The two are not mutually exclusive.
4. Federal regulations and accreditation have added layers of legal complexity to higher education, meaning that today's educational leaders must be fluent in regulatory rules, legal interpretations, and compliance.
5. Because the contemporary world has automated many interactions and functions that are distinctively human, the essence of leadership is not the leader, but the relationship. Therefore, leaders must cultivate relationships in multiple ways using multiple methods. Most particularly, rather than relying solely on asynchronous instruments, leaders should use a variety of tools to articulate and connect.
6. Collaboration is an oft-quoted instructional ideal, but its modeling in higher education organizations may fall short of the ideal. Hence, today's leaders must adopt and adapt a decision making process that is more open, less linear, and more collaborative in order to foster creativity. This decision making process can benefit from such models as design and architectural thinking.
7. Because of higher education's growing dependence on the many new and emerging technologies today's leaders must be fluent in these technologies, particularly as they apply to learning. At the same time, they must take care that such technologies do not become a distraction from learning.
8. Given the greater need by higher education institutions for financial support, colleges and universities should consider remodeling their operations to emulate the structure of successful businesses. By following a business format while also partnering with businesses, colleges and universities can receive more fiscal support from policymakers and legislators. Since the interests of business, such as for-profit growth, are closely tied to higher education, partnering with business is necessary to yielding higher earnings. Nonetheless, to develop successful relationships, higher education must change its platform to that of a profitable business.

In conclusion, a considerable body of research suggests that to successfully provide dynamic support and enhancement, leaders in higher education must have particular skills and knowledge (Chenoweth & Everhart, 2002; Lambert, 2003; Peterson, 2002; Reiss, 2007; Reynolds, 1996). These skills include the abilities to (a) establish shared vision and core values; (b) build a sense of community; (c) create a sense of ownership; (d) provide insight and identify strengths and areas for growth; (e) empower, enable, and build capacity; and (f) implement strategies that share knowledge with others to ensure the system's evolution. The research further indicates that an educational leader's knowledge base must be characterized by (a) an understanding of good pedagogy; (b) a recognition of innovations that positively impact teaching, learning, and scholarship; (c) familiarity with local and global influences; (d) the ability to identify elements that support effective and efficient leadership; and (e) a comprehension of the strategies that build leadership capacity. These insights from the extant literature imply practical advice that college and university leaders at all levels could implement immediately in order to address the internal ramifications of cynicism and demoralization. By doing so they could develop essential prerequisites for becoming effective and successful educational leaders. Specifically, such leaders should know the environment, know the university/college, know themselves, know how to lead while celebrating diversity and enhancing the student experience, know the key strategic challenges to higher education, know university governance, know institutional financial health, know the university as an ecology of learning, know how to manage reputation, and know how to communicate in a crisis. All these aspects necessarily make up successful leadership performance.

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