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# Q & A for New CEOs

**COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA**

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New CEOs (even those who have been a president at another college) have many new things to learn when they take a new position. The League has identified common questions in the areas listed in this document and offered some answers. If you have more questions, contact The League at (916) 444-8641 or e-mail [cclc@cleague.org](mailto:cclc@cleague.org).

## **Participation in Shared Governance**

### **What is “shared governance”?**

Education Code 70902(b)(7) required the Board of Governors to adopt regulations that “. . . ensure faculty, staff, and students . . . the right to participate effectively in district and college governance.” The regulations are contained in Title 5, sections 53200 et seq., 51023.5. and 51023.7. They mandate that the governing board “consult collegially” with the academic senate on academic and professional matters, and that staff and students have the opportunity for “effective participation” in decisions that affect them.

The term “shared governance” does not appear in law or regulation, however, it is used to refer to processes that involve faculty, staff, and students in decision-making. The American Association of University Professors uses the term widely to describe institutional governance processes and the role of the faculty in university governance.

However, “governance” in community colleges also refers to the role of the board of trustees. Ensuring that faculty, students, and staff participate effectively in decision-making and making recommendations to the board does not replace the board’s governance role.

While the term “shared governance” is commonly used, the League and Senate encourage that its use be curtailed in favor of more precise terms.

### **What is the role of the college or district’s chief executive officer in participatory decision-making and collegial consultation?**

Ensuring that the process works is a major task of the CEO. CEOs who believe in collaborative processes and the value of faculty, staff, and student involvement in decision-making will be more likely to be successful.

New CEOs should become thoroughly familiar with local policies and procedures, including assumptions and history about “the way things work.” They should also understand relevant laws and regulations.

Even though regulations delegate participation in decision-making to others, they do not abrogate the CEO’s responsibility to make decisions. The CEO is accountable to the board and college for the outcomes of those decisions.

In addition, the CEO has responsibility for establishing timelines and institutional priorities, developing structures and processes, and providing information. Making certain policies are in place and procedures are followed is the responsibility of the CEO. Participating within the established structures and processes and providing leadership for change when change is needed is critical. The district or college CEO is the critical link between constituencies and the board of trustees and usually serves as the designee of the board in governance matters.

The best situation is when the CEO and the various constituencies are in agreement on recommendations that are made to the board. However, if agreement is not reached in a timely manner, the CEO still has the responsibility for taking action or placing a matter before the board for a final decision. In doing so, the CEO would be well advised to present the matter, the processes used leading to the recommendation(s), the points of agreement and disagreement among constituencies, the decision options available and the CEO's recommended action. The decision of the board of trustees is final and the CEO then has responsibility for implementing that decision through established processes.

### **What is the role of each constituency group in consultative processes?**

There are three primary constituency groups identified in law or regulation that have a role in governance and the decision-making processes. These are faculty, through the officially identified Academic Senate; the staff, and students. "Staff" means non-faculty members, which may include classified staff and management staff.

#### *Faculty/Academic Senate*

District boards of trustees are required to consult collegially with academic senates on academic and professional matters as defined in regulation. These matters include curriculum, degree requirements, grading policies, student progress standards, faculty role in governance structures, accreditation, professional development, program review processes, and processes for planning and budgeting. Consultation on "processes" in program review, planning and budgeting means exactly that: it is not required for boards to consult collegially on the content of program review, planning, and budget documents (although many people may be involved in the development of those documents).

"Consult collegially" is further defined to mean that a board when developing or adopting policies on academic or professional matters must either "rely primarily upon the advice and judgment of the academic senate" or "reach mutual agreement" when making decisions. The board or its designee must "consult collegially" to establish policy which identifies if "relying primarily upon" or "mutual agreement" will be the process to be used when considering academic and professional matters.

Either option may be used for each of the eleven areas described in law; however, policy and procedures must be established and then used in the decision-making processes.

A CEO must become familiar with the district's current policies and procedures and act accordingly. If the board disagrees with the Academic Senate's recommendation in a final decision related to academic or professional matters, the board must have substantive rationale for the decision it makes and submitting that rationale in writing to the Senate is appropriate.

#### *Staff*

Regulations state that staff should be granted opportunity to participate in developing policies, procedures and processes if they have an effect upon staff. The areas and processes to be used are not further defined in regulations.

Most districts have focused on the role of classified staff in implementing these regulations. Depending on the college and district, a role in decision-making is defined for and input is sought from the classified senate, council or unions.

The management staff is a group that often is not considered a constituency group, but is critical to the effectiveness of the CEO and the institution. This group is often overlooked when determinations are made as to the processes to be used in decision making. The CEO is responsible to identify those to be included in the management processes and clearly determine what their roles will be within the structure. Since policy implementation is regularly delegated to managers, they will be more effective if they are involved in all processes for determining policies.

Their role is critical and must not be overlooked.

#### *Students*

Regulations for student involvement specify areas for participation, including grading, student codes of conduct, academic discipline, curriculum, educational programs, processes for budgeting and planning, student standards, student services planning and development, fees, and faculty evaluation and hiring. Students should have opportunity to participate and be given reasonable consideration in the development of policies, procedures and processes in these areas.

Actively involving students can be particularly challenging. The number of students involved in student government, which is the official representative, may be limited. At the same time, there may be a large number of student groups that want to be represented. The difficulties, however, do not relieve districts from the responsibility to seek student involvement.

### **Do I have to agree with and accept the recommendations of individual or collective constituent groups?**

The short answer to this question is "No." The CEO has responsibility for making decision or making a recommendation to the board of trustees.

The longer answer is that the CEO must remember that he or she is an extension of the board of trustees and therefore upholds the spirit and intent of laws, regulations, and board policies. Using consultative processes to consider actions and make decisions will contribute to a more positive environment and strengthen how decisions are implemented. While agreement may not always be possible, constituency understanding is enhanced by providing written rationale or opportunities to discuss issues. How to foster understanding varies depending on the significance of the decision and to whom it applies.

### **I have more questions. Where do I go?**

More has been written about "shared governance" and how to make it work. The Community College League and the Academic Senate for Community Colleges (ASCCC) together developed guidelines for faculty participation in district and college governance, as well as scenarios that provide further information. This document is available on ASCCC's Web site at: <http://asccc.org/node/174911>.

## **What can I do if there are ongoing unresolved issues in “shared governance”?**

The statewide Academic Senate and the Community College League are organizations that are available for advice and support when resolution is not forthcoming or disputes arise. These organizations have jointly established a process through which technical assistance may be requested. When assistance is requested a team will visit the campus in an attempt to facilitate resolution.

If the college’s or district’s Academic Senate believes there is noncompliance with law, regulations, or board policies, it may file a complaint with the Legal Affairs Division in the Chancellor’s Office. The General Counsel will investigate credible complaints and determine if corrective action is needed in order to be in compliance with regulations. The last possible action for local academic senates to pursue is to seek remedies through the state Attorney General’s office or in court.

## **Establishing Priorities**

### **Now that I’ve been appointed to the CEO position, what is my highest priority most likely to be?**

Clearly, your CEO responsibilities are many and varied. Time will not permit you to address all issues at once. There are multiple constituency and/or interest groups, each with specific agendas (some of which conflict with each other) for which your support will be sought. The groups are internal to the campus and involve the community. Thus, it is important to get to know the players and where your priorities need to be placed. However, there is no magic answer.

Certainly, having an understanding of the board’s priorities, or those of the chancellor, if you are a president in a multi-college district, is critical. Some priorities were discussed before you accepted the position; however, additional discussions should take place immediately upon assuming the position. These priorities may be written as goal statements and guidelines for follow-up evaluation according to established procedures and timelines.

Understanding board and chancellor’s expectations and priorities is critical to success; misunderstanding is disastrous. Establishing a plan that incorporates their priorities is critical and will assist you in focusing attention on the most important tasks.

### **What written information is both likely to be readily available and of assistance in getting to know the organization?**

Written documents that will be extremely helpful in developing an understanding of the college/district include: board agendas and minutes for the past year, the budget, the last college accreditation self-study and visiting team report, any individual program accreditation reports, any educational or facility plans, program review reports, minutes from the college governance committees and the curriculum committee, the academic senate minutes, and the college catalog and class schedules.

These documents can reveal college staff perceptions, issues, areas of agreement and disagreement, strengths and weaknesses, and areas on which the college community has been working.

## What role should groups or individuals play as I learn more about the organization?

First, meet with and get to know your senior administrators and other administrative leaders, and the leadership of the various constituency groups. Have discussions in whatever format is comfortable for you and in these discussions, focus on understanding the priorities of the individuals and groups, what activities they are involved in, and what their short and long range goals are. This will tell you much about the expectations they will have of you as the new CEO and will help you establish your priorities.

Meet with each group as a whole after meeting with the leadership of the various groups. These meetings provide an opportunity for you to meet administrators, faculty, staff and students; answer questions; and gain a sense of the level of commitment to the goals and issues of each group. Perhaps most importantly, it provides opportunity for them to meet you.

## How should I learn about the educational and student service programs?

As mentioned in a previous question, it is helpful to review relevant documents. However, without getting to know the people involved and what their interests and priorities are, you will be only partly informed. Use the existing administrative structure and arrange to meet with a manageable number of people for group discussion within each department (instructional and student services).

Meetings will be most beneficial if you can talk with groups of 25-30 people who have similar interests within their programs. This format will allow you to do a great deal of listening to help you formulate ideas about the perceived strengths, weaknesses, needs, of the programs. From this learning, you may develop your own goals and priorities for the college as a whole.

The more information you can obtain prior to establishing your priorities, the more likely you are to have support once you present your thoughts and ideas. In addition, you will have greater insight as to what the objections might be and where conflict will arise. Knowing that, and preparing for it, will lead to greater success as you move the college in the direction you believe to be important. At the very least, faculty and staff will appreciate your interest in knowing what they have to say and will likely give you support as you move forward.

## What other areas should be considered prior to establishing priorities?

*Facilities.* Get to know how the facilities are accommodating current programs as well as projected needs. The perceived strengths and weaknesses of the buildings and grounds are important in preparing facility plans and allocating budget.

*Your Team.* As the new CEO it will be extremely important for you to build a team that will be an extension of you and your office and thus assist you as you establish plans and priorities. The management team is critical (see organizational structure).

*Community Relationship.* Given the nature of community colleges, an important priority is the relationship the college has with the communities external to the college campus that it serves. The relationship often is dependent on board concerns and goals, but also is significantly impacted by growth, enrollment patterns, demographics, athletics, vocational programs, expectations from business and industry, foundation activities, and the like. If these are areas of concern, then finding ways to assess community interests while establishing priorities is very important.

## Board and CEO Relations

### What can I do to get off to the most positive start with the board?

A good start with a new board is critical. Thinking long range, as well as short term, will be helpful. If you are new, that probably means the existing board hired you and therefore you are starting positively. To maintain that positive relationship:

1. Get to know individual board members, their interests in serving on the board, their goals for the district or college(s), and what they would like to see accomplished.
2. Review the past year's board agendas to determine the types of issues that have been brought to the board, the decisions that were made and what the vote of the board was. Determine if the board has been unified or review any divisions that occurred and if there was consistency in those divisions.
3. Schedule an early retreat or workshop with the board to further explore your job description and goals for performance as well as any expectations they may have in terms of style, protocols, and communication. Develop a common board/CEO vision statement and/or set of goals. Consider doing personality profiles to foster understanding among all. Using an outside facilitator to conduct these types of retreats may be helpful.
4. Determine right away when and how your evaluation will be conducted.
5. Discuss with the board major changes that may occur, strategies for effecting those changes, and likely emotional reactions when changes occur.

### What do I need to know about board/CEO responsibilities?

It is important to understand board versus CEO roles and responsibilities.

Education Code Section 70902 authorizes local boards and defines and states the powers of those boards, including delegation of power and authority to the chief executive officer and/or other staff.

Education Code Section 72400 also speaks to the authority of the chief executive officer. Title 5 of the Administrative Code also includes regulations that define the board and CEO's responsibilities. The California Government Code and federal laws and regulations also have some influence.

The Community College League of California (CCLC) has other documents, which will be helpful to you in understanding board and CEO responsibilities, including: "Board and CEO Roles: Different Jobs, Different Tasks" and CEO evaluation resource materials. In addition, 48 districts subscribe to the League's Policy and Procedure Service: if your district is one of those, the policy templates you have reflect legal differentiation and delegation of authority between the board and CEO.

## What do I need to know about board/CEO relationships to increase my effectiveness?

Always remember that as the CEO, you are responsible to the board of trustees, a legal unit of one. However, while board members cannot take independent action as individuals, in reality you must think of them as individuals while working with them as a collective body. As a CEO, you are not only responsible for your own success but also for the board's success.

A CEO's relationship with the board will be enhanced if the CEO, as a matter of practice, functions within both a job description established as policy and mutually agreed upon objectives to be completed within specified timeframes. These two documents serve as the basis for CEO evaluation, which occurs on a predetermined timeline using a mutually agreed upon process. Establishing a job description, objectives, timeline and an evaluation process in advance strengthens the relationship and avoids problems..

Most board members serve because they have specific interests, and determining those interests is critical to their and your success. You cannot ignore the specific interests, needs, and idiosyncrasies of each elected official. As CEO, you too will have specific as well as broad based interests. Gaining the board's confidence and acceptance of your interests is imperative.

As CEO you must never take the board or the decisions they may make for granted. Preparation and information are critical to insure the appropriate reactions, responses and decisions.

## What functions and tasks should be given high priority in your relationship with the board?

Some high priority practical actions related to the board include the following:

1. Learn about each board member and his or her interests and preferences.
2. Hold a retreat or workshop with the board early in your service as CEO to clarify your expectations of the trustees and their expectations of you. Discuss communication styles and protocols.
3. Make sure each board member understands his/her role and the commensurate responsibilities of a board member. They may not act accordingly; however, that is another issue.
4. Assist board members in avoiding conflict of interest issues or the appearance of it.
5. Foster a common purpose and teamwork among board members, often by pursuing activities which require working together.
6. Carry out all board policies and actions delegated to you in a conscientious and timely manner.
7. Insure all board members have equal access to the same complete information in a timely manner.
8. Accurately represent board positions in all public statements.
9. Encourage on-going education for all trustees through the resources available to you and to them.

## What can I do to enhance communication with the board?

Frequent and predictable communication with the board of trustees is critical to the success of the Board and CEO. Some practical suggestions are:

1. Provide information requested by one trustee to all trustees.
2. Send regular, brief “news notes” on a regular schedule, i.e. every Friday or every other Monday. Possible items include upcoming issues, trustee development opportunities; major community and college events, and unexpected happenings since the last communication or board meeting. Although you need not send these “news notes” to others beyond the board, never forget that this communication is legally considered public information—avoid including anything that is confidential in nature or that is better discussed with the board as a whole.
3. Schedule periodic meetings with individual trustees to provide information, answer questions, and learn about their interests of trustees and priorities. Initially, once every two months or so may be advisable. As trust and awareness of issues develop, less frequent meetings may be sufficient.
4. Automatically send trustees press releases, newspaper articles, college newsletters, other publications, invitations to special events, etc..
5. Contact individual board members in the event of an emergency, i.e. power outages, bomb threats, reported fires, job actions, etc. You want to be the first to inform them rather than their awareness developing from the media.
6. Regularly invite board members to contact you with any information they may receive or any questions they may have.
7. Schedule periodic board “retreats,” study sessions, or workshops to explore topics in depth, including board evaluations, strategic planning, fiscal issues, etc.

## What else should I do to ensure a positive transition when a vacancy or a board election occurs?

Always remember you work for the board, whoever might be serving. Demonstrating a bias for individual(s) prior to appointment or election to the board is a recipe for disaster. Communicating with all who have expressed interest in serving on the board helps foster success.

Therefore, once a person indicates interest, contact that individual and offer to provide information about the district or college(s). Provide candidates with past board agendas, strategic plans, budget, college catalogs, etc. Offer to meet with them to answer questions and provide first-hand input. This meeting assists both the candidate and the CEO, as the process of discovery about the person and his/her interests in serving begins. Offer the same services and opportunities to all candidates, to avoid being accused of partiality.

The League has information on appointing processes and for trustee candidates available on the League’s Web site, and each year mails packets of candidate information to districts holding elections.

## **What can I do to positively effect the transition once a new board member is appointed or elected?**

Once new members are known, contact them with congratulations and establish a time as soon as possible for meeting with them individually.

Local “orientation” materials for new trustees can be extremely helpful. Gather materials to which new trustees should be introduced, such as relevant laws, regulations and policies. Inform them of projects in process and issues, and related timelines, that have been and will be addressed by the board. Provide information about statewide issues, resources available, what and how they can anticipate you as CEO will function, and timelines on matters that will come before the Board. Provide a tour of the district/college(s), organizational charts, and introduce them to personnel whose names they are likely to hear or read about. In other words, take actions that will help them be informed and knowledgeable about the district and college(s) they are governing and that will assist them in fulfilling their role as a trustee.

In addition, encourage them to attend the League’s Trustee Orientation Workshop (held in late January or early February each year) and other trustee conferences, and ensure they have the handbook and other materials that the League provides for new trustees.

Do what you can to help them understand you, their role and that you are interested in their success. This takes time, but is well worth it.

For more information, see *Orientation and Development for Community College Trustees* published by the League.

## **What issues are most likely to occur that could lead to problems?**

Trustees who lack understanding of the community college mission and therefore the goals and objectives of the district and/or college(s) may go in multiple directions where unity is critical. A second outcome may be satisfaction with the status quo even though it may be appropriate to question and challenge the current direction of the district.

Trustees who over-react to special community interests or pressure from within the district may seek premature and uninformed decisions.

Trustees who focus on individual agendas rather than the “big picture” may get in the way of a unified approach to problem solving.

A lack of understanding of the difference between making policy decisions versus the responsibility of administration may lead to micromanagement.

Personal agendas or the desire to “fix something” can lead to narrowly focused discussions, consequent micromanagement, and rivalries and jealousies among board members.

Individual board members who deal directly with staff may cause some staff to have undue influence, with consequent division between staff and board members in the long run.

This list is not all-inclusive, but identifies just some of the most frequent and damaging issues that arise.

## Where can I go for advice if issues are arising with the board that are having, or have the potential for, a negative impact?

Depending upon the nature of the issue, the appropriate resources may vary; however, consider the following:

1. Written resources available through the Community College League of California, the state Chancellor's Office, American Association of Community Colleges, Association of California Community College Administrators, Association of Community College Trustees.
2. Consultation services provided by the League on Call, Community College League of California.
3. Services as identified in the Community College League of California Business and Consultants Directory.
4. Workshops and seminars provided by professional associations including Community College League of California.
5. Statewide CEO meetings.

## Structuring the Organization

### What flexibility do I have as CEO in establishing the administrative structure of the organization?

The CEO has tremendous flexibility in establishing the institution's administrative organization. Some boards of trustees have adopted policy relative to their role in establishing administrative structure and, if so, the CEO must act within that policy.

Presidents of colleges in multi-college districts also have flexibility, but should be guided by the chancellor of the district.

In either case, there are some legal due process requirements that should be followed if personnel are significantly affected by the reorganization.

### What role should the board play in organizational structure?

If the board has adopted policy related to the organizational structure and processes for changing it, CEOs must adhere to the criteria and processes in the policy. If there is no policy, the CEO need pay attention only to related law.

Whether or not the board has a policy, it is still wise to keep the board informed of steps being considered or being taken to avoid future questions or concerns. From the very beginning, inform trustees about your intentions, the steps to be taken, the information you gather, and your thoughts on possible options for structure and individuals to be assigned with the possible consequences. Alert them to matters that may become issues. Use closed sessions of the board to discuss individual names and possible consequences.

If the final decisions are perceived to have negative outcomes or are not politically popular, staff will likely attempt to involve the board. The CEO needs to know the pulse and commitment of the board to potential recommendations before widespread disruptions occur.

College presidents in multi-college districts need to take similar steps with the chancellor.

### **How should I learn about the past?**

As a new CEO, spend the first few weeks meeting with as many individuals and groups of individuals in the college as possible. Most will be willing, and even anxious, to provide information. As more and more information is obtained, themes will likely become apparent and an accurate picture will begin to develop.

In addition to these meetings, review written documents, such as minutes of board meetings, governance committees, and the academic senate; the accreditation self study and team report; and recent changes in policies and procedures.

Engage in listening, listening and more listening until information becomes repetitive and clear themes develop. You will quickly learn what sources you can depend on for accuracy and completeness. It will be beneficial to check information or impressions with those resources prior to any action.

### **What role does participation in local decision-making (i.e. “shared governance”) play in these decisions?**

How the institution is organized affects everyone in the college, and therefore submitting thoughts or plans and seeking input through the established local decision-making processes is advisable. Broad input generally contributes to more effective decisions. (Exceptions to seeking broad input are personnel actions, which are confidential.)

It will be easier to implement new structures if you have sought input and consulted with faculty, classified staff, students and administrative staff on organizational changes and new expectations. Discussions can become protracted; therefore, establishing critical dates and timelines in advance should contribute to the efficiency of the discussions, decisions and recommendations.

If there are a number of people within the organization who could be considered for appointment to each new or changed position, you may want to use the college’s hiring procedures to make these appointments. This would be an unusual situation, but is worth considering if options are truly possible. It is imperative to follow policy and procedures for any new position to which a current employee will not be assigned. Such processes typically provide for faculty involvement; and involving the faculty is critical.

### **Will the proposal affect the faculty’s role in decision-making? If so, what are my responsibilities?**

“Administrative or organizational structure” is not listed as an academic or professional matter in Title 5 for which the board must “reach mutual agreement” or “rely primarily upon the advice and judgment of the academic senate” when making a decision. However, if the reorganization will change the process by which faculty contribute to decision-making (through the academic senate or the college organizational structure), the academic senate must be involved. Such input is to be focused solely on the affect of the proposed structure on the faculty role in governance, not about the individuals to be assigned. The latter leads to discussions that would be of a confidential nature.

## **What consideration should I give to the management when designing a new organizational structure?**

The effectiveness of, and your relationship with, the management team is critical to your success as a CEO. First, the management team needs to be identified in terms of the positions that are included. Typically, the team includes “senior” level managers, “middle” managers, and supervisors. Whether or not division or department chairs are considered management varies among institutions. A structure that includes the groups defined as managers in the decision-making processes will be necessary.

The chairs, supervisors, and middle managers are most often the “implementers” for decisions. Thus they are critical to the success of decision implementation and without their participation in the processes, success will be less likely, if not impossible.

Get to know the members of the management early. Whether you meet with them in small groups or individually depends on their number and the size of your organization. Individual meetings are most helpful, although some small group meetings may be necessary. The best information will come from individual meetings in which each person has the freedom to discuss what he or she enjoys doing most and least, personal goals, and areas of concern.

All those at the same level should be met with in the same manner—meeting all supervisors individually or all deans in a group setting will have greater acceptance than meeting some supervisors or some deans individually and other supervisors and deans in small groups.

Some individuals are more guarded than others, whether in groups or meeting individually, and you may not learn much from them in the meeting. Regardless of the depth of discussion, making an attempt to hear them will serve you well in the long run.

The information you receive through these meetings should be extremely beneficial as organizational structure is considered and adjustments are proposed. Carefully assess what currently exists prior to making changes. Very difficult decisions may have to be made, but without careful assessment, it is easier to make significant errors that have a long-term effect.

## **What are my responsibilities to management or administrative associations or unions?**

In many districts, managers and administrators have formed a group that represents them on a “meet and confer” basis on matters such as compensation and assignments. Even if there is not a representative group, most districts have a document—essentially a management handbook—that outlines policies and procedures that apply to managers and administrators. If this document has been adopted by the board of trustees, it has the force of a legal document. If not, it still is important that the procedures related to assignment and compensation be followed. Violating established procedures will interfere with the progress of the reorganization and possibly alter the final outcome.

In a few cases, administrators and managers have formed unions, and any reorganization must be guided by guidelines in the union contract.

## **Must I accept recommendations received from constituency groups on administrative organization?**

Recommendations on administrative organization are just that, recommendations. It is entirely possible that discussions will yield suggestions, which, if incorporated into the plan, will lead to a better structure. Therefore, recommendations should be carefully considered. However, the final decision in matters related to the organizational structure is the responsibility of the CEO within law and any policy parameters established by the board of trustees (or the chancellor, if a multi-college district).

## **What flexibility do I have in establishing committees and making appointments to them?**

Committee structures are important in the effectiveness of any organization. The CEO must carefully consider and be keenly aware of which committees or groups deal with “academic or professional matters” as defined by state regulations. If a proposed committee deals with “academic or professional matters,” regulation requires that the academic senate must be consulted on its formation and must make appointments to these committees after consultation with the CEO or his/her designee.

Committees not dealing with academic or professional matters are not subject to academic senate action; however, it is advisable to act within the intent of collegial decision-making and consult with the affected groups prior to decisions being made. If committees are to include a classified staff member, the classified union must make the appointment; and if a student is appointed, the student organization is responsible.

Once all the information is collected and an assessment is made, what should be done?

The first step after careful assessment of the needs and issues is to finalize in your own mind where you believe changes need to occur within the organizational structure, whether by position or person. It is important to determine where the greatest resistance will arise and where support is most likely to occur. Then, without putting your thoughts in writing or identifying responsibilities for specific people, develop a mechanism for sharing your thoughts and tentative organizational plan with the college community in order to obtain feedback, answer questions, and seek suggestions.

Once the input and consultation phase is complete, move forward by discussing specifics with individuals involved, preparing the written documentation and informing the college community of your decisions. However, depending upon the amount of change involved, recognize the possibility that there may still be a great deal of resistance and efforts may be made to prevent the plan. How committed you are to your decision(s) will affect the final implementation.

In the long run, the success of the plan will be greater if more time, rather than less, is taken. As a first step, develop a timeline for implementation with critical dates. Proceeding according to the timeline and not allowing delays will get you where you need to go in a timely fashion.

## How do I deal with the people who will be affected?

It may be difficult to balance the timing of talking with those who will be affected by the decisions and at the same time maintain confidentiality. Yet, doing so is critical because obviously the greatest effectiveness is achieved when those who are affected “buy into” the final decisions.

If you know that changes will be made, meet with managers individually as suggested earlier under “What consideration should I give to the management when designing a new organizational structure.” During such meetings, focus and seek input on their background and experiences, perceived strengths and weaknesses, short term and long-term personal goals, and potential individual interests. Hopefully, this information can be used when considering individual assignments.

Once tentative ideas on assignments have been developed, consult with the current supervisor and the potential new supervisor of a person to be assigned to a new or different position. The supervisor’s input may not only be enlightening but s/he may have very strong opinions that could affect the success or failure of the new arrangement. It is critical to know the potential supervisor’s reactions and meet with the individual to be assigned prior to any public announcement.

If you are still seeking input or are tentative about your decision, meet independently with the individual. However, if you believe your decision is final, invite the new supervisor to meet with you and the individual to be assigned. In all of these meetings, stress the critical nature of confidentiality until a public announcement is made. This may be more or less difficult depending upon how satisfactory the decision is to those who are affected. Because of this, all meetings should be held within as short a time frame as possible prior to final decisions being announced.

Obviously, effort must be made to make changes without a perceived demotion or loss in compensation. It is definitely advantageous to provide increased compensation, if possible and appropriate. Sometimes changes in titles, even without increased compensation, will contribute to increased status, satisfaction, and thus acceptance. Consider all of these alternatives.

What are the legal considerations regarding personnel changes?

The comments here cannot be considered as legal advice; however, they may be helpful in seeking input from human resources experts or legal counsel.

First, legal ramifications and regulatory requirements vary depending upon whether the person to be effected currently holds a “classified” or “academic” management position. In either case, regulations establish minimum time requirements to notify individuals whose assignments will be changed, and regulations should be checked for each position or person. For example, changes in assignment for an “academic” manager may require a March 15 notice for implementation on July 1 of the same year. Such a notice may require board action; therefore, establishing timelines to accommodate such action is critical. Earlier implementation may be possible if there is no perceived negative impact on the individual and s/he agrees to the change; however, verify proposed changes with experts.

Downward changes in compensation are much trickier and again, guidance from human resource personnel or legal counsel is imperative. If an individual is to be reassigned out of management, consideration must be given to whether or not s/he has tenure with the district, which impacts possible assignments and potential options.

California's hiring and personnel regulations provide for open employment, and generally require recruiting for open positions. However, these regulations may be waived in a reorganization if specific criteria are met. Generally, it is possible to reassign persons from within the organization if a cost analysis demonstrates a cost savings or reduction, even if promotions are involved. If the new structure results in new positions, current employees or individuals from outside the organization may be assigned to these positions on an interim basis.

