Module Two - The Managerial-Leadership Roles of Department Heads

Welcome to the world of managerial leadership! We say that with enthusiasm because as a department head of a county University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension office, you hold a position of great importance. As you know, this position typically contains multiple roles such as:

- Programmer in your content specialty
- Representative to the county of the entire UW-Extension programming effort
- Manager of departmental operations
- Leader of teamwork, manager of meetings, and initiator and implementer of change in your county department

How you carry out your multiple roles can make a true difference:

- Between robust, responsive and relevant programming meeting contemporary county needs in an efficient, innovative and effective manner and weak, unresponsive, out-of-date programming that drains resources and wastes time;
- Between a cohesive, productive office team whose work is characterized by high productivity, creativity and morale and a weak group separated from one another by discipline, status and function whose work is marked by confusion, conflict and frustration.

This module of the Managerial-Leadership Curriculum will outline and clarify:

1. Definitions, roles and responsibilities of department managerial leadership (I took out “how to balance them” because I didn’t see that info in the text)
   a. Terms and elements of managerial leadership
   b. The leadership model of James Kouzes and Barry Posner
   c. Differences between managing and leading
   d. Extension’s managerial-leadership philosophy
   e. Department heads’ responsibilities and desired work results
2. Support you can expect to receive from Extension administration
3. Your managerial-leadership skills via 360-degree feedback
   a. The meaning of 360° feedback and how it can improve capabilities
   b. Typical questions regarding the 360° feedback process
   c. Properties of the Leadership Performance Inventory—how to administer and use it
   d. Critical insights to your leadership skills
4. How to build and sustain a productive and cohesive office team
   a. How teamwork can “work” for your department
   b. The importance of trust in effective team functioning
   c. How sharing successes can help a team work well together
   d. How to create a “customer-service” focus in your department
   e. How to plan and conduct effective meetings
5. Initiating and implementing change in your unit

a. Why people resist or cooperate with change

b. How to use a tool for determining the feasibility of change

c. Elements for initiating effective change

d. Alternative methods of influencing change

Section 1: Definitions, roles and responsibilities of department managerial

Cooperative Extension believes that decision-making responsibility, authority and accountability should reside at the local level, the county. This is consistent with contemporary business management and leadership practice. Localized decision-making fosters greater entrepreneurship, quicker reactions to changing conditions in your county and more relevant programs delivered faster to your constituents. Your county partners expect you, as a department head, to manage and lead your department in the same manner as other county departments operate.

Strong local leadership in county offices relates directly to the legal, philosophical and funding bases of UW-Extension. Wisconsin law establishes a partnership between county government and the university to work together to develop the direction and scope of the county Extension program. Healthy Extension programs cannot exist without strong county partners, who contribute a significant portion of the funding and support for county Extension programs. County representatives know their needs better than do administrators in Madison or district offices. Therefore, to maintain efficient and effective programs, local management is necessary.

Section 1a: Terms and elements making up managerial leadership

Management is the processes by which an organization systematically plans, organizes, leads, and evaluates activities and resources to achieve a common goal.[1] This set of functions mirrors essentially what you do in your programming role—that is, the creation and delivery of educational programs. Management and adult education share virtually the same components.

Planning refers to setting goals and figuring out how to reach them in an efficient and effective manner. Typically, this function consists of both strategic planning and operational planning.

Strategic planning consists of developing long-range plans and priorities for a specific unit of responsibility. At UW-Extension, we employ strategic planning to set our educational priorities and program focus for our four-year work plans. This allows us to step back and look at where we've been, determine where we want to go and create plans for how we will get there.

Operational planning includes day-to-day activities such as developing the budget for a special project in the office or devising work plans.

Program planning serves as the basis of our program-development and program-delivery processes

Organizational planning helps work groups set direction and carry out change.

Organizing refers to assigning and coordinating work and allocating enough resources to carry it out. Many roles are associated with this function including:

- Creating position descriptions for specially funded staff and working with district directors and program leaders to define responsibilities for permanent staff positions
- Clarifying assignments
- Explaining organizational policies, rules, and procedures
- Coordinating work and sharing information within your unit
- Developing and maintaining a network of work-related contacts outside the organization: clients, stakeholders, county organizations, etc.
- Working with county and state personnel systems to recruit, hire, train, promote, and terminate staff

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[1] Ramon J. Aldag and Timothy M. Stearns, *Management*, second edition (Cincinnati, OH: SOUTH-WESTERN, 1991), p. 13; Andrew J. DuBrin, *Essentials of Management* (Cincinnati, OH: SOUTH-WESTERN, 1986), p. 5.

- Allocating existing human, physical, and fiscal resources, and seeking additional resources
- Delegating tasks

Leading refers to influencing people, both inside and outside the unit, to achieve the organization's goals. Many activities are involved in leading, such as:

- Serving as the spokesperson for the department to external stakeholders
- Serving as main liaison to Extension and county administrators
- Negotiating with colleagues, other units, other outside partners and county or state administration for resources
- Coaching county department faculty and staff by providing orientation, support, recognition, performance feedback, and assistance in creating and carrying out plans for improvement
- Building and sustaining effective teamwork within the unit by creating a motivational climate and consistent, clear communications
- Serving as a change agent for the unit, suggesting improvements to programs and services for county clientele

Professor John Kotter, of Harvard University, one of the foremost thinkers regarding contemporary leadership, describes it as the process of moving an organization through mostly non-coercive means toward objectives that ultimately serve the long-term best interests of all stakeholders[2]

Leadership is a process, not a product; it consists of a series of ongoing activities, not an isolated act or two. Its primary focus is on moving, initiating and implementing changes in the unit to improve its functioning.

Leaders engage others in accomplishing objectives, creating a future vision, and developing long-term goals and the strategies to achieve them.

Evaluating refers to ensuring progress is made toward goals. Roles associated with evaluating include:

- Creating systems for monitoring progress toward departmental goals and clarifying those systems with faculty and staff
- Ensuring formal and informal program evaluation strategies determine the effectiveness of county educational programs
- Handling disturbances, such as formal grievances, complaints from clients, staff conflicts, etc.

[2] John Kotter, *Power and Influence: Beyond Formal Authority* (New York: Free Press, 1985), p. 16.

Section 1b: The leadership model of James Kouzes and Barry Posner

One of the best contemporary models of leadership—which Extension has found helpful—is the Leadership Practices Model, outlined in *The Leadership Challenge* by James Kouzes and Barry Posner.[3] Keep your copy of this important book on your desk for easy reference throughout your tenure as department head. The model, described below, consists of those practices leaders engage in and the commitments they keep. It is built from intensive research into the contemporary leadership practices exhibited in thousands of successful projects.

Practices	**Commitments**
Challenging the Process	1.Search out challenging opportunities to change, grow, innovate and improve.
	2. Experiment, take risks and learn from the accompanying mistakes.

[3] (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995), p. 18.

Inspiring a Shared Vision	3. Envision an uplifting and enabling future.
	4. Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to their values, interests, hopes and dreams.
Enabling Others to Act	5. Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust.
	6. Strengthen people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks and offering visible support.

Modeling the Way	7. Set the example by behaving in ways that are consistent with shared values.
	8. Achieve small wins that promote consistent progress and build commitment.
Encouraging the Heart	9. Recognize individual contributions to the success of every project.
	10. Celebrate team accomplishments regularly.

Section 1c: Differences between managing and leading

As we hope you have noted, several significant differences exist between **management** and **leadership**[4]. Your responsibilities as a county department head unite these two functions. You're not only a manager or only a leader. You carry out a complex set of managerial-leadership roles.

Management	**Leadership**
Planning	Creating Vision
Budgeting	Setting Overall Strategy
Maintaining the Status Quo	Being an Agent For Change

[4] John Kotter, *Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management* (New York: The Free Press, 1990, p.25.

Organizing	Aligning People
Controlling/Monitoring	Inspiring
Directing	Empowering Others to Solve Problems and Make Decisions

Section 1d: Extension's managerial-leadership philosophy

Each county department head position is unique and varies due to differences in size and complexity of the county program and county administrative structure.

Serving as a leader and as a manager, department heads, appointed in joint agreement by Extension and county government, carry out managerial-leadership functions according to the following principles.

1. County Extension managerial leaders foster creativity, innovation, high morale, teamwork, and shared leadership, responsibility and accountability for all faculty and staff through positive work climates.

2. Cooperative Extension's managerial leaders create environments that allow themselves, faculty and staff to live out our core values: research, scholarship, community knowledge, local needs, excellence, innovation, partnerships, honesty, integrity and diversity. We believe our people are our most important resource. As leaders, we must also maintain appropriate confidentiality.

3. County Extension departments provide faculty and staff with the resources necessary to conduct educational programs.

4. Departments encourage opportunities for all faculty and staff to achieve personal and professional growth.

5. Department Heads establish environments where all faculty and staff share their best efforts and work productively in a cohesive climate marked by high morale.

Section 1e: Department heads’ responsibilities and desired work results

Primary responsibilities of county department heads are classified in four overall categories. Working collaboratively with all faculty and staff, department heads provide managerial-leadership for program, internal relations, resource management and external relations. Desired outcomes for each responsibility follow.

1. Program: *Providing county residents with a comprehensive, excellent and innovative educational program that responds to their needs.*

   Desired Outcomes:

   - A comprehensive Extension program based on local concerns and educational needs
   - Collaborative work between department and program areas to support faculty and staff programming efforts
   - Faculty and staff seek out and secure resources for innovative programming

2. Internal Relations: *Providing an environment which produces high productivity and morale*

   Desired Outcomes:

   - A positive and creative work environment promoted through positive role modeling, encouragement, support and coaching

- Teamwork and shared leadership
- System in place for efficiently and effectively disseminating information to office staff through regularly scheduled office meetings and other appropriate means
- Staff and faculty participate in county, district, and statewide meetings and teleconferences
- Well-informed district director regarding departmental activities

3. Resource Management: *Your department efficiently and effectively manages human, fiscal and physical resources and effectively implements relevant policies and procedures*

Desired Outcomes:

- Efficiently and effectively run department operations
- County budget created by an inclusive process and advocated by department head for approval
- Appropriate and well maintained cash-handling, budget-monitoring and budget-reporting systems for funds from all sources
- Successful recruitment, hiring, orientation, supervision and performance review of department employees in accordance with county and state procedures
- Regularly scheduled performance review of specially funded staff

- Self-initiated performance review (SIPR) process in place and reviews conducted regularly with faculty and staff
- In collaboration with the district director and appropriate program leaders, performance improvement plans are implemented
- Advocation of staff development
- Clearly understood and followed EEO/AA policies
- All county and state human-resources policies and procedures followed appropriately, including the county's collective-bargaining agreement
- Proper documentation of departmental activities
- Clearly understood and followed fiscal policies and procedures.
- Well-maintained appropriate county records (e.g., personnel, fiscal, meeting minutes, etc.)

4. External Relations: *Maintain positive, productive relations and a professional image with county partners, other external stakeholders and clients.*

Desired Outcomes:

- Primary point of administrative contact in your department for county government
- Fiscal, physical, and human resources secured from county administrative staff and/or board members

- Comprehensive county marketing plan in place
- Positive working relationships and excellent communications with county departments, elected officials, administrative staff and other critical stakeholders
- Fairly represented and equally advocated program areas
- Program results reported to county, state, and federal stakeholders.
- Awareness in other county departments and agencies of how Cooperative Extension can add value to the services they provide

Section 2: Support you can expect to receive from Extension administration

As a department head, you work in a complex environment. You work for two levels of government and must identify and negotiate the shared interests of local government with your state or county partner. You provide leadership for staff who may work for either local or state government, or some combination. In this complex environment, you represent both the dean and the district director and serve as the lead contact with the Extension education committee and the county administration. Given that, what can you as a department head expect from Extension administration.

Administrative Support

We are fortunate to have a group of capable and committed district directors who view your effectiveness as a department head as their highest priority. District directors are available for planning strategy, collaborating in problem solving, and providing supportive coaching and counseling.

Program leaders and program-area liaisons will help you develop new programs or redirect existing programs. Program-area staff work with your county's faculty and staff to plan, implement and evaluate local programs and to encourage cross-program-area cooperation.

The dean and associate dean value your work as a department head and understand the complexity and stress of the role. To the extent possible, they will provide you with the human and financial resources to enable you and your team to succeed, encouraging risk taking and providing training.

Training and professional development

UW-Extension is committed to helping you develop the skills needed to provide effective leadership for your county office. This includes an annual conference designed by and for department heads, on-line web-based professional development and management resources and opportunities for in-depth learning through participation in regional National Extension Leadership Development (NELD), The Ohio State University Assessment Center, the Extension Administration Leadership Program (EALP) or other leadership experiences. You should develop a professional development plan and work with your district director to identify strategies for your continued learning about managerial leadership.

Technical assistance and support services

You are fortunate to have many excellent resources to deal with the challenges faced by all administrators:

- Your district director provides the first point of contact for issues and concerns.

- JoAnn Gruber-Hagen (joann.gruber-hagen@ces.uwex.edu or 608-263-5008) provides assistance for personnel and personnel-policy-related concerns.
- Mike Hallenbach (mehallen@facstaff.wisc.edu or 608-265-5127) provides employee assistance.
- Sharon Klawitter (sharon.klawitter@ces.uwex.edu or 608-263-1945) provides help regarding Extension positions, new colleague orientation and effective recruiting.
- Dan Malacara (malacara@admin.uwex.edu or 608-263 -7941) and the budget office help with budget questions and concerns.
- The WISplan help desk (608-265-3895) provides quick and effective assistance with computer and technology problems.
- Program leaders and program-area liaisons help with program development and access to specialists and other campus resources.

Role modeling

District directors, program leaders and representatives of the dean's office serve as good role models for you and our faculty and staff. They model our organizational values and exhibit good habits in work/life balance.

Assistance with role/workload negotiation

As a department head, you probably are also planning and conducting programs in your specialty. It's easy to get overwhelmed and you may need help balancing the time you spend in your department head roles. You may have to reduce your programming load or secure part-time help to backfill in those areas you cannot attend to because of time constraints. District directors and program leaders will work with you and your county partners to negotiate a manageable set of expectations and a reasonable workload.

Feedback and support for you and your work

As a department head, you need feedback on your performance. You need to know that the organization supports and appreciates your work. District directors are committed to providing you with formal and informal feedback through SIPR and through less-formal on going coaching and mentoring. Another great way to determine how well you are carrying out your responsibilities is through 360° feedback, a tool you can use to gather data regarding your leadership performance.

Role of Program Areas

County Extension offices exist to conduct programs tailored to the needs of the community. County Department Heads are responsible for the overall leadership of the county's Extension program. This includes--

- Developing a community-based planning process that identifies community needs and involves a broad representation of community members
- Leading local priority setting to create a manageable plan
- Ensuring that the planning process and programs delivered address the needs of all community residents and that special efforts are made to provide educational programs for the underserved
- Promoting cooperative programming between program areas to address local problems
- Representing the entire office program to county and external stakeholders
- Ensuring that programs are evaluated and that the results are shared with stakeholders and are used for program improvement

Department Heads work with Program Areas to--

- Identify educational and human resources needed by county faculty and staff
- Orient and provide program-development assistance for new faculty and staff
- Serve as a member of a management team to resolve local program "challenges"
- Distribute current and timely information about programs and trends

- Share successful program models and provide communication linkages across county lines
- Contribute to the Self-Initiated Performance Review (SIPR) by participating in the evaluation of faculty and staff; participating in one-, two-, and three-year reviews; and providing other program support.

Section 3: Your managerial-leadership skills via 360-degree feedback

"It is much more difficult to judge oneself than to judge others."

--Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (1900-1944), *The Little Prince* (1943)

"O wad some power the giftie gie us

To see oursels as others see us!

It wad frae monie a blunder free us,

An' foolish notion."

--Robert Burns (1759-1796), *To a Louse* (1786)

Section 3a: The meaning of 360° feedback

The method of 360° feedback is all about helping you increase your self-awareness. The term 360° feedback refers to the process of:

1. Systematically collecting opinions about a person's performance from him or her as well as a wide range of other people who have observed the person in action.

2. Communicating the information collected to the person in a way that helps him or her enhance performance, whether augmenting a current strength or eliminating a current weakness.

Research indicates that 360° feedback, if done systematically with the right instrumentation and appropriate coaching, can improve performance and lead to sustained behavioral change over time.[5]

Section 3b: Typical questions regarding the 360° feedback process

1. Why does performance improve as a result of using this method?

Many of us do not seek or get regular feedback regarding our performance and we are somewhat blind to our own strengths and weaknesses.

When systematic feedback from others is provided in an understandable fashion, we can raise our awareness of our strengths and weaknesses and choose to make the changes necessary to perform our roles more effectively.

Our self-perceptions are naturally narrow and naturally biased and our self-image does not necessarily match the image others have of us. Each of us has blind

[5] L. Atwater, P. Rousch, & A. Fischtal, The influence of upward feedback on self and follower ratings of leadership, *Personnel Psychology*, 48 (1995), 35-59; G. M. Smither, M. London, N. Vasilopoulos, R. Reilly, R. Millsap, & N. Salvemini, An examination of the effects of an upward feedback program over time, *Personnel Psychology*, 48 (1995), 1-34; E. Van Velsor, M. Ruderman, & D. Phillips, The impact of feedback on self-assessment and performance in three domains of management behavior. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, April, St. Louis, 1992.

spots regarding our behavior and often these can only be revealed through feedback. The multiple perspectives provided by 360° feedback help us become more aware of our performance quality.

Feedback given in a 360° manner is provided to the individual from multiple perspectives. At work, one can receive feedback from peers, co-workers, superiors, direct reports, customers, and vendors—all those stakeholders who are in positions either to directly observe the person's performance or are affected by the performance. Usually, all stakeholders (the individual included) complete the same well-constructed instrument anonymously and send data to an outside compiler. The compiler arrays the information in an understandable format and shares its conclusions with the individual in a straightforward, supportive manner—all in an effort to help the person improve. The individual being reviewed, then creates and activates an improvement plan, based on the feedback, with the help of his or her coach.

This feedback process works best when the results are used solely for developmental purposes. If raters know the data will be used as the basis for promotions or salary improvements, they generally rate people more leniently and less accurately.

2. Are people naturally defensive regarding this manner of feedback?

Whenever we receive information about ourselves that does not fit our self perception, we naturally defend ourselves by denial, deflection, attack,

withdrawal

or some other protective device. Just as the human body tends to naturally reject an organ transplanted from another, the human mind instinctively tries to protect itself from feedback that does not square with its own limited view.

When faced with 360° feedback, people create all sorts of excuses, some of them creative and humorous. Here are the top ten reasons, contributed tongue-in-cheek, by the Center for Creative Leadership[6]:

10. My job makes me act that way; I'm really not like that.
9. This was just a bad time to ask for feedback.
8. All my strengths are right, but my weaknesses are not.
7. Everyone has it in for me.
6. I used to be that way, but I have changed recently.
5. Nobody understands what I'm going through.
4. This must be someone else's report.
3. My raters didn't understand the questions.
2. They're all jealous of my success.
1. It's all accurate, but I just don't care.

3. What can be done to reduce defensiveness?

The following four suggestions will help reduce defensiveness:

[6] C. T. Chappelow, "360° feedback," in *The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development*, eds. McCauley, C. D., *et al*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), pp. 49.

A management culture and climate that emphasize honesty, trust, personal accountability, self-development and growth rather than dictation, coercion, pretense, shame, punishment and fear

An evaluation instrument that is appropriately designed, reliable, valid and administered conscientiously

A supportive coach who helps the participant understand and use the feedback in ways that produce positive changes in behavior and performance

A participant who is open to individual feedback and has a strong desire to improve, emotional maturity to sustain confidence and the courage and discipline to change

Section 3c: Properties of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)

The LPI, a 360°-feedback instrument, is based on the Leadership Practices Model of James Kouzes and Barry Posner discussed earlier. The LPI, published in 1988, is one of the most widely used and scientifically sound 360° feedback instruments available to provide information to leaders regarding their behaviors on the job. Your district director will help you administer and interpret the results.

Please see Appendix A (**LINK HERE**) for a description of the instrument, its properties, how it is administered, and how the results can be used to enhance leadership performance. (SIDE MARGIN CATEGORY FOR WEB PAGE HERE)

Section 3d: Critical insights to your leadership skills

The following questions will help you gain insights to your role as a leader in personal and organizational change. After you have had an opportunity to reflect on these questions, contact your district director to set up a time to discuss your answers or to have him or her assign you to a mentor department head for his or her review.

Ten questions to guide your reflection as a leader

1. What are my strengths and weaknesses?
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of my department?
3. Where do I need to improve my leadership ability?
4. Where does the county department need to improve: productivity, quality, control of costs, safety, competitiveness, personnel knowledge and skills, morale, innovation?
5. What are our opportunities for small and big wins?
6. Do we have a common vision and purpose? What are they?
7. How do I inspire and motivate and others and myself to support, commit to and work to accomplish our common vision and purpose?

8. What do I need to do to build a cohesive and productive team?

9. What do the people in the unit need to do their best?

10. How can we put more joy and celebration into our efforts?

Section 4: How to build and sustain a productive and cohesive office team

Success doesn't "just happen." Behind every success is a lot of planning, hard work and personal energy. Similarly, a productive and cohesive office environment doesn't just happen. It requires the department head to assume leadership responsibilities for providing the overall direction and guidance of the office team.

As department head, you are a role model for others in the office. Your general attitude and responses to the day-to-day pressures and decisions set the tone for the entire office. Be aware that others observe your body language and personal manner. In essence, your attitude and demeanor influence people around you.

Section 4a: How teamwork can "work" for your department

Much of our work is accomplished through teams. A team can be defined as two or more people working together to achieve a specific goal. Coordinated team activity is necessary to attain team objectives. Researchers Carl Larson and Frank LaFasto studied a diverse range of real teams to determine what led to their success. They concluded that successful teams possessed these factors[7]:

- A clear, elevating goal. Goals are clear when there are specific performance objectives and there is no doubt when they are attained. Goals are elevating when they challenge people on the team to stretch and excel.

- A results-driven structure. Teams should be designed around results to be achieved and established in a way that individual and combined efforts always lead toward the desired goal.
- Competent team members. Three components of competence are essential for successful teams: skills and abilities, a strong desire to contribute and the capability of working collaboratively.
- Unified commitment. Described as “team spirit,” unified commitment is characterized by genuine dedication to the goal and a willingness to expend lots of energy to achieve it.
- A collaborative climate. Team trust and members who are willing to take risks are components of a collaborative climate.
- Standards of excellence. High standards that are well established and maintained are important.
- External support and recognition. Sufficiently recognizing a team’s accomplishments is important to the team’s success.
- Principled leadership. Strong team leaders lead by translating their guiding principles into clear and consistent leadership behavior.

Most of us participate in several teams as we carry out our Extension work, including educators working with support staff, program assistants, colleagues within an office or between county offices, other community organizations and partners, and state specialists in program teams

[7] *TeamWork* (Newbury Park, CA: 1989).

Extension supports and encourages teamwork throughout the organization. As a county department head, you are the team leader for those individuals in your office. One aspect of creating a cohesive office team is to think of the total Extension program as a “whole” instead of an office with four distinct program areas. Programs and resources are enhanced when they are viewed as interdependent–each working together to create synergy.

Building a sense of team within your office is an ongoing challenge. If your office is not used to “working together,” this may take some time. Your role as team leader is to encourage a collaborative climate where team members communicate openly, disclose problems or concerns, share information, help each other overcome obstacles and discover ways of succeeding.

As issues are identified in the county program-planning process, flag those that are interdisciplinary and would be best addressed by cross-program teams. Encourage and provide time for the group to think as a group. Seek ways to foster ongoing communication within the team. The more opportunities team members have to share ideas and resources, the more likely they will be to share their program knowledge, passion, excitement and creativity. Provide guidance and follow-up support in the form of resources, encouragement, problem solving and recognition.

Team members benefit from access to shared resources. Create space within the office for shared resources on team issues and general topics (leadership, volunteers, evaluation, community development, etc.) and provide time at staff meetings to regularly review shared resources regularly.

Section 4b: The importance of trust in effective team functioning

The level trust within the environment is significantly affected by office cooperation and collaboration. According to Kouzes and Posner, “Trust is at the heart of fostering collaborations . . . . Trust is also an essential element of organizational effectiveness.” [8]An important predictor of an individual’s satisfaction with his or her organization is trust. As department head, it is one of your roles to assist in building a trusting environment within your office team.

Trust is a virtue inherent in any successful human relationship. You can achieve trust by maintaining these four elements:

- Honesty: Tell the truth, no exaggerations
- Openness: Be willing to share and a receive information
- Consistency: Be reliable and predictable behavior and responses
- Respect: Treat people with dignity and fairness

Trust within the team can yield the following results:

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[8] *The Leadership Challenge*, p. 163.

- Trust allows members to focus on the problem rather than cohesion or trust issues
- Trust promotes more efficient communication and coordination. Team members feel comfortable to openly seek and share information and resources
- Trust improves the quality of collaborative outcomes. Team members are more willing to take risks
- Trust leads to shared understanding and commitment. Team members are willing to step in for one another.

Building trust takes time. Trust is fragile. Once it is broken, it is very difficult to regain confidence and effective functioning.

Section 4c: How sharing successes can help a team work well together

Another way to foster a cohesive office team is to share the program successes of the entire Cooperative Extension office. County program results affect individuals and communities. By developing ways to share program results, members of your office team can share in the overall success. When a member of the office team communicates the success of your entire program (not just that of one area), he or she reinforces the value of teamwork and contributes to overall unity.

***LINK HERE ***The module “Communicating Value” (#____) will provide more specific content regarding marketing. Nevertheless, here is a quick list of practical examples of how to use program successes and other targeted strategies to create a cohesive office environment:

- Describe successes at county department head meetings and/or county Extension education committee meetings
- Provide news for the county employee newsletter or web page
- Create and distribute one-page impact reports
- Take time at office staff meetings to allow teams to report on their accomplishments
- Find ways to regularly communicate the office’s accomplishments and results with local stakeholders (examples include the Marathon County Extension Impact Report, Waukesha County’s Report Card, and Kenosha County’s Audio “Commercial”)

Section 4d: How to create a “customer-service” focus in your department

As a department head you are in a key position to provide leadership in establishing a positive customer service atmosphere. Ask yourself--

- How are others treated when they enter our office or call us on the phone?
- How often do we step back and look at the level of service provided from the customer’s viewpoint?
- What do the signs, posters and images on display say about our office?
- How are volunteers, interns and summer help treated in the office?

We encourage you to engage your entire office team in addressing these questions. Consider using the First Impressions tool developed by Andy Lewis to encourage discussion on what can be done to improve customer service.[9] This tool provides an unbiased and unique perspective. You can use it for self-assessment or invite others to share impressions of your organization.

Section 4e: How to plan and conduct effective meetings

Conducting regular staff meetings can ensure open and ongoing communication among all members of the office. Too often, support staff are left out of the communication loop, so remember to include them in part or the entire staff meeting. Regular staff meetings provide opportunities for input regarding decisions that impact the entire office. They also offer opportunities to communicate about ongoing and upcoming programs. Staff-meeting time becomes the forum to learn from each other, discover where opportunities may exist for collaboration and keep current on program results.

Determining when and how often to meet should be decided with input from all staff members. Typically, Extension offices find that Monday mornings are a convenient time to meet; many offices “piggy-back” their staff meetings with the dean’s monthly ETN meeting or a district director’s monthly ETN meeting. Be sure to involve all staff members in establishing the agenda. In doing so, you encourage positive teamwork.

Other methods of communication may prove useful to share “information-only” items: e-mail, bulletin boards, internal newsletters, broadcast voice-mail messages and desk-drop memos/letters.

Most of us are “meeting-ed out.” We attend so many that going to an office staff meeting is unappealing. To help you keep your office meetings effective and efficient, remember that members expect to be treated well, to be involved and to use their time productively. They expect excellence from you. What’s that?

Characteristics of excellent meetings[9] have the following characteristics:

- They are results oriented – accomplishments and decisions are made
- Little or no decision rework is necessary. Groups do not have to get together again to decide something that was already decided
- The decisions made are thoughtful, reasonable and will lead to actions that will make a difference
- Members feel their time was well spent and they have fun.

Please see Appendices B and C for tools that may help you plan and conduct effective staff meetings.

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[9] www.uwex.edu/li/andy/firstuwex.html

[9] John E.Tropman, *Making Meetings Work* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1996), p. 187.

Section 5: Initiating and implementing change in your unit

As you may remember from the first part of this module, leadership is, according to John Kotter, “the process of *moving* an individual or group in directions that are ultimately in the long-term best interests of the group” (emphasis added).[10] This definition clearly implies that one of the principle roles of leadership is serving as an ongoing engine for change, innovation and improvement of the organization’s capability. Change initiation and implementation are critical processes that every effective leader must master.

As an Extension department head, you should feel very comfortable in this role. Initiating change is what you do in your educational-programming role when you help your clients learn and grow through accepting and adopting new knowledge, skills, attitudes and practices.

For the last three decades, books such as Alan Toeffler’s *Future Shock*,[11] John Naisbitt’s *Megatrends*,[12] and Peter Vaill’s *Managing as a Way of Being: Strategies for Survival in a World of Permanent White Water*[13] have emphasized that our age is characterized by constant change. It doesn’t take a great deal of study to see significant shifts occurring in Extension. We have all seen changes in the types of clients we serve and their levels of education and sophistication, in

[10] *Power and Influence: Beyond Formal Authority* (New York: Free Press, 1985), p. 16.
[11] (New York: Random House, 1970).
[12] *Megatrends: Ten New Directions Transforming Our Lives* (New York: Warner Books, 1982).
[13] (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996).

what those clients want and need from us and how they want it, in new knowledge and practices, and in new methods of delivering information and educational programs.

What forces drive those changes? Certainly, the county environment itself is experiencing constant change in population demographics, economics, politics and administrative structures. People's needs are simultaneously becoming both more basic and more sophisticated because of significant growth in the range of education attainment, influx of immigrants, changes in family structures, and growing wealth disparities in the population. Add to all of that modern technology, which continues to revolutionize what we do and how we do it.

Cooperative Extension units serving in this world of "permanent white water" need to constantly adapt themselves to the new realities facing them and continue to adopt new practices to ensure they are able to fulfill their educational missions in an efficient and effective manner. Not doing so means the end of our viable functioning. Organizations must change or die!

But change should not be enacted for its own sake. For a change to be meaningful, it must meet the following criteria:

- The change itself must be **of high quality** in terms of technical soundness. It should not be whimsical, pie-in-the-sky or unsupportable. It must be achievable.

- The change must be acceptable to stakeholders who will have to live with it.
- The change must be perceived as a solution to one of the organization's problems or opportunities.

How do you as a managerial leader help your unit plan for and implement improvements needed for your county office to remain viable, vibrant, robust, relevant and effective?

Here are some tools that will help faculty and staff in your county learn how to be more powerful agents for improvement and innovation.

Section 5a: Understanding why people resist or cooperate with change

Most of us are pleasure seekers and pain avoiders. We live comfortably in what we do, where we are, who we are, what we are used to, what feels okay, what we know and where we go. Outside of what we perceive is normal is somewhat strange, unknowable and sometimes scary. To change something, especially if we are really used to it and we think it works for us, means that we step outside our comfort zones into an anxiety zone. Most changes, even the smallest ones, create a bit of panic in many of us. What can you do as a leader to calm people's fears and give them the confidence to take risks?

First, you will need to create an environment of trust and respect where people are not punished but rather encouraged for experimentation and taking calculated risks. Second, provide definitive answers to some basic questions such as:

1. Why are we contemplating a change? What is the need to change? What proves that we have a need to do some things differently? What's the rationale for the change?

2. What are the benefits of the change to me? The unit? The clients we serve? The community? How will the change allow us to get the good, avoid the bad, reduce or eliminate the bad or help us keep and expand the good that we already have?

3. What is the cost/benefit ratio? Are the benefits we plan to enjoy as a consequence of the change greater what the change will cost us in time, stress and other resources associated with the change? Every change has costs.

4. What are the risks to the unit if we fail to implement the change or if the implemented change doesn't work the way we thought it should?

Third, make it clear that you are not changing things for the sake of changing them. Fourth, it is also important to involve your colleagues intimately with change and be open to discussions before, during and after any change is implemented. Many people going through the anxiousness and uncertainty usually associated with change just need a climate of openness, honesty, encouragement, support and patience. As a department head you play crucial roles in establishing and maintaining that trust. You also need to constantly be a source of encouragement for people going through the changes. Your positive role modeling and cheerleading can make a huge difference in encouraging people to adopt and adapt.

Section 5b: How to use a tool for determining the feasibility of change

To determine the feasibility of a change, you and your team should gather to discuss questions one through four above (Module 2, Section 5A.). This will help all of you see the need for change and realize the benefits that will come from it. However, first, we strongly urge you and your team to conduct a feasibility assessment.

A tool you can use to determine whether to begin the process of making a change is a feasibility analysis. Your team can work together to conduct this analysis. Here's how to conduct one:

Step 1: Define the current situation and define why a change is necessary. You have already done this when you created your rationale for the change.

Step 2: Define the desired situation and why it would be better. Again, you have accomplished this already through your cost/benefit analysis and risk analysis.

Step 3: Determine the specific changes needed to move the situation from current to desired.

Step 4: Identify forces promoting the change (Driving Forces/DFs) and those inhibiting the change (Resisting Forces/RFs).

By forces, we don't mean the advantages and disadvantages of the change; instead, we mean people (proponents and opponents of the change) and the availability of information, time, funds, technology and other resources.

Step 5: Evaluate the weight of each force. Estimating the strength of each force is largely subjective. As in all steps of this process, use the combined brainpower of an informed group of people to estimate the strength of each driver and resister.

Step 6: Decide if your plan is a "go," "no go," and work to reduce RFs and boost DFs

We have outlined the process through an example below to help you clarify how to use this tool:

Step 1: Define the current situation and why it needs to change:

Sam Smart from Goodness County returned from a meeting with the new county executive, a former 4-H'er. She told him that she fears many of the new county board members view the Cooperative Extension program as serving only 20 percent of the population that is rural and that the county can no longer support a "special-interest" program funded from general-purpose revenue. In next month's budget meeting, she expects a motion from the floor to reduce funding to the Extension office by 80 percent. Fortunately, your department recognized the potential imbalance of rural and urban programming five years ago and moved then to redirect programming. It has not done a great job educating new board members or the new county executive.

Step 2: Define the desired situation and why it would be better:

Members of the county board see the Extension program as not just a rural-only program but one that meets the needs of urban residents as well. Most of the board understands and supports the program, as does the county executive. Strong constituent support groups back the current program.

Step 3: Determine the specific changes needed to move the situation from current to desired:

A concerted educational effort of the Board and the new executive is sorely needed.

Step 4: Identify forces promoting the change (Driving Forces/DFs) and those inhibiting the change (Resisting Forces/RFs):

DFs: Local stakeholders, newly elected county board members

RFs: Some office staff and faculty who do not spend much time advertising program successes; we lack time and other resources to promote successes.

Step 5: Evaluate the weight of each force:

The new county board members are influential, vote as a block, but lack knowledge and experience with Extension programming successes. The county executive will influence them heavily. She is positive about Extension but still believes its programming is geared to the rural-only community. She is bright, nevertheless. Office faculty and staff need to be convinced that they need to promote Extension successes for both rural and urban audiences.

Step 6: Decide if your plan is a “go,” “no go,” and work to reduce RFs and boost DFs:

Section 5c: Elements for initiating effective change

The following planning model integrates what we know about different reactions to change with a plan for implementing change. Let's walk through the steps together:

Phase 1: Create Readiness

To help your team get ready for change, make them aware of the need for change, generate interest in it and unfreeze current behavior. Most people like what is comfortable, known and easy. Unless they perceive that a real problem or opportunity exists in current programming or operations, most people will not willingly step out of their comfort zone to do the hard work of making change happen.

As an Extension department leader, you and the members of your office need to be constantly aware of what is happening outside the office in the county you serve. Frequent contacts with all those you work with are critical to establishing and maintaining the information base your unit needs to anticipate changes and to react to them in a positive manner. Encourage your department to engage in continual strategic planning based on acute sensitivity to the changes occurring outside your office's door. Without such awareness, faculty and staff will resist changing what they do and how they do it because they don't see any need to do so.

Methods to generate awareness and interest include the following:

- Leading prominent county citizens or other governmental units to encourage change through various direct or indirect means such as: a dictate, an informal request, and the reallocation of budget dollars. For example, if your county administrator pledges new dollars for UW Cooperative Extension programs to serve previously underserved populations in your county, the leader's endorsement of the change will help convince faculty and staff to take action. The dean's monthly ETN teleconference and Extension newsletters can all stimulate interest and awareness.

- Holding small-group discussions with other county departments may encourage people within your own unit to think outside the box to adopt successful practices developed in other units.

- Conducting an annual analysis can identify the changing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) of Extension in your county. A bulletin board devoted to

- Field visits by faculty and staff to areas where successful change initiation has occurred may encourage awareness and interest.

- Scheduling annual meetings with faculty and staff from each program area, all-division meeting, and other Cooperative Extension statewide conferences can pique people's interests.

- Holding regular unit brainstorming and problem-solving sessions focused on a single problem or opportunity can maintain high levels of awareness and high motivation for action.

Phase 2: **Trying out the Change**

Develop commitment to the change and the knowledge and skill needed to implement it by encouraging trial, evaluation, and training. Unless people are truly committed to make changes, they may drag their feet, implement the change in a slipshod fashion or simply talk a good talk but not act. People, once committed to an improvement, need to possess the knowledge and skill necessary to carry it out. Without that, they feel insecure, unaware, stupid and fearful. Methods to encourage trial and evaluation of changes include the following:

- Facilitating and providing emotional support for faculty and staff and help team members move comfortably through this phase.
- Conducting onsite training sessions or sending people to outside training classes allows people to enhance their competence and their confidence in knowledge and skills necessary implement change.
- Conducting pilot projects or field experiments and measuring and communicating the results helps people see that change is possible and will be beneficial.
- Using knowledgeable, experienced specialists from other Extension units can help provide necessary expertise during this trial and evaluation stage. As stressed before, you are not out there alone. Your district director will always be available to you when you need assistance.
- Providing necessary resources, time, equipment and job aids is critical to ensure people can develop the knowledge and skills to implement change.

- Creating and communicating an action plan and schedule for implementation are also help.

Phase 3: **Stabilizing the Change**

Refreeze the situation and reinforce new behaviors to encourage widespread adoption or institutionalizing of new methods. Practice the cycle of try, do, check, adjust and do again. During this phase, errors are corrected and successes are reinforced and rewarded in an effort to help people master the change.

Methods of refreezing and adoption include:

- Practice, practice, practice
- Providing continual feedback regarding results
- Coaching for improvement to correct errors
- Providing lots of positive reinforcement for improved performance

Section 5d: Alternative methods of influencing change

The methods so far described all take a good deal of time and effort. We believe such time is well spent; however, when time is of the essence, you may need to consider alternative methods.

Other methods to consider when you may not have time to create an optimum solution include: negotiation, compensation, and dictation.

Sometimes you will need to negotiate with resisting parties to find a compromise that both parties can live with. The solution may be less than ideal and take away some of the benefits of the change, but it is sometimes the only workable tool. Negotiation is often used when collaboration with the change is as important as decision quality. For example suppose a fulltime position becomes vacant in your office. As a budget-saving measure, the county administrator tells you that she plans to reduce the position to half time. You know the finance committee and county finance director will support her actions. Because the former staff member in the position had limited community support, you know that rallying widespread community support is not feasible. But you may be able to negotiate a 75 percent appointment instead of half time.

A compensation approach may be used when your optimal solution isn't an option. For instance, the administrator in your county orders that your department will lose one of its half time program assistants. You cannot do anything to change the administrator's decision but you can discuss the change with your team, communicating what you know about the change and the rational for it. Then, if possible, try to find a way to provide some sort of compensation to help take some of the sting away from the pain to the person being let go. You might help the person find a new position, allow him or her to go to a resume service funded by your office or provide the person with severance pay. As a public-sector employee and working with unionized staff, you may be severely limited in what you are able to offer in the way of compensation. Always check with county or state administrative staff before making any compensation offers.

Due to time pressure generated from important stakeholders in your system, you may sometimes have to use dictation or coercion to get changes implemented. For example, staff members cannot be allowed to have “checkbook” accounts that are not run through the county financial structure. When you determine improper handling of funds, you must put a stop to it. This means laying down the law and clearly outlining consequences. Sometimes, someone needs to step up and vigorously say, “No.” Use dictation rarely, as it will sour the relationship between you and your colleagues. Trust will be eroded. Willing collaboration in the future will be constrained. But the change will occur.

Appendices

A. Leadership Practices Inventory

B. Meeting-Leadership Skills

C. Staff-Meeting Checklist

D. Annotated Bibliography

Properties of the LPI. The five scales used in the LPI are based on analyses of more than 1,100 managers' descriptions of their personal best experiences as leaders. The LPI's psychometric properties are fairly robust, with reported internal reliabilities reported between .79 and .90 and test-retest reliabilities at the .93 level and above.[14]

How It Is Administered. The LPI is easy to administer and to interpret. The person in focus, the subject, completes the instrument for himself or herself and distributes up to 10 other instruments to people at work with whom the leader frequently interacts, such as—

- The person to whom the leader reports (his or her superior or boss)
- Peers or colleagues, fellow managers or leaders at his or her same rank
- Direct reports
- Others, including clients, ad hoc team members, etc.

The process works as follows:

1. The leader completes the LPI, checking the **Myself** box on page 3 and sending in just that page to the feedback administrator by the due date, ensuring that his or her name is included.
2. Each of the others anonymously does the same, **carefully** marking that box on page 3 that most accurately describes his or her relationship with the leader. One must be careful here to designate the correct role. If a

[14]. Barry Z. Posner and James M. Kouzes, *Psychometric Properties of the Leadership Practices Inventory*, ed. K. Munson (San Diego: Pfeiffer & Company, 1992), p. 3

faculty, academic staff member, or classified staff member in a county department is providing feedback

to the department head, he or she should mark the role as **“I report to this person.”** Similarly, a district director, who supervises the department head, should mark his or her role as **“This person reports to me.”** The observer then sends page 3 to the feedback administrator for processing.

3. The feedback administrator compiles the data for each leader and sends out individual reports to both the leader and his or her superior.

How It Can Be Used. The supervisor and the leader should review the report together for feedback; coaching and creating an action plan for enhancing performance. They can also plan to reassess the leader after a period of months, using the same instrument and same observers, to measure progress. For a more thorough description of exemplary coaching behaviors, see Module 5 of the Managerial-Leadership Curriculum *** LINK HERE****. Data from this inventory is invaluable and can help you and your department grow.

Appendix B: Meeting Leadership Skills[15]

As a team leader or facilitator, use the following discussion-leadership skills:

- **Provide Clarification.** At the outset of the meeting, clarify the objectives and agenda of the meeting, your role in it and logistical details. Clarify the communication ground rules and the participants' questions.
- **Be Enthusiastic, Committed, Respectful, and Empathic.** Nothing destroys the interest of the participants more than a disinterested leader or facilitator. Show interest, energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to the success of the meeting through your verbal and nonverbal behavior and through the thoroughness of your preparation. Be respectful of participants' time, their opinions, and ideas. Show your empathy by arranging the meeting's logistics and agenda to appeal to the participants.
- **Ask for Clarification.** If you are unclear about the topic being discussed, the point being made, or the logic of the argument, ask clarifying questions. Ask members to state their point in different ways. Ask for examples, supporting evidence, contrasting ideas, etc.
- **Act as a Gatekeeper.** Encourage more-or-less equal participation among group members. Make openings for less aggressive members by directly asking for their opinions or making a general request for input. Discourage dominators, but either do it in private or structure the group process to limit their contributions.

[15] Modified from Peter R. Scholtes, Brian L. Joiner, and Barbara J. Streibel, ***The Team Handbook,*** second edition (Madison, WI: Oriel Incorporated, 1996), pp. 4-11-12.

- **Listen.** Actively explore one another's ideas rather than debating or defending each idea that comes up.
- **Summarize Periodically.** Occasionally compile what has been said and restate it to the group in summary form. Follow a summary with a question to check for accuracy.
- **Contain Digression.** Do not permit overly long examples or irrelevant discussion.
- **Manage Time.** If portions of the agenda take longer than expected, remind the team of deadlines and time allotments so work can be accelerated, postponed or reallocated.
- **End the Discussion.** Learn to tell when there is nothing to be gained from further discussion. Using a summary, help a team close the discussion and decide the issue.
- **Constantly Evaluate the Meeting Process.** Assess the quality of the discussion and the use of time. Ask, “Are we getting what we want from this discussion? If not, what can we do differently in the remaining time?”

Appendix C: Staff-Meeting Checklist

	Always	***Sometimes***	***Rarely***
Staff meetings are held regularly.			
Meeting agenda is shared in advance.			
All staff has an opportunity to add items to agenda.			
Staff meetings are safe environments for sharing ideas and having discussion.			
Minutes of meetings are recorded and shared.			
Staff meetings include support staff (*for at least part of the meeting)*.			
Meetings start and end on time.			
Workload for support staff is discussed and understood by entire staff.			
Information from Administration, county government, etc. is shared with all staff regularly.			
County program team(s) have an opportunity to share accomplishments.			
Educators share weekly calendar.			

Appendix D: Annotated Bibliography

Kotter, John P. 1990. *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management*. New York: The Free Press. In this well-regarded text, Professor Kotter definitively compares and contrasts the roles of leaders and managers in clear, compelling language, laced with contemporary research findings.

Kouzes, James M., and Posner, Barry Z. 1993. *Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. The authors provide here practical guidance for leaders at all levels to build and sustain their trustworthiness with their stakeholders. Readable, crisp, well supported with examples—easy on the eyes.

__________. 1995. *The Leadership Challenge: How to Keep Getting Extraordinary Things Done in Organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. In this, the second edition of their popular text, the authors clarify their model of what leaders actually do to achieve excellence in the units they serve. Solidly based on research evidence gathered from thousands of practicing leaders, the text is lively, practical, and inspirational.

Larson, Carl E., and LaFasto, Frank, M. J. 1989. *TeamWork: What Must Go Right/What Can Go Wrong*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. This concise, practical text provides researched-based keys to effective teamwork from 34 organizations--large and small, public and private--that have pulled off successful team accomplishments.

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Tropman, John E. *Making Meetings Work: Achieving High Quality Group Decisions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1996. Loaded with tools to assist the meeting manager, this text is practical, readable, and thorough—a must for any department head.