



Summer 2007 AMA Educators' Conference High Impact Sessions

Session 3.3 Moving into Administration

Session Chair: Sandy Jap, Emory University

Participants:

Christine Moorman, Duke University

Tom Robertson, University of Pennsylvania

Russ Winer, New York University

Gary Lilien, Penn State

Session Summary Writer: *Iana Nelson, Arizona State University*

The decision to move into administration can be a difficult one and one that will have an impact on one's career. This session provided valuable insights from four people who served, or currently serve, different roles in administration. Gary Lilien, Penn State, discussed the lessons, costs and benefits of opening and running a research center. Christine Moorman, Duke University, shared her experience serving as department chair and working as part of a committee that conducted a search for a dean's position. Tom Robertson, University of Pennsylvania, talked about his experience serving as dean, the work that it entails and some success factors. Russ Winer, New York University, discussed his experience as a vice dean and some of the reasons why someone would choose to move into administration.

Gary Lilien, Penn State, described the process of starting a research center, the costs and benefits associated with starting a center, and how to make the yes-or-no decision when deciding whether to start a center. One of the costs associated with a center includes some common conflicts with the university environment and values, since a research center has certain characteristics of a business such as the need to provide benefits to customers (in this case sponsors). The benefits of a center to the center organizers include being able to focus on important research issues, institution building, and participating in knowledge co-production with a guided research agenda. Dr. Lilien believes that the yes-or-no decision on whether to try to start a center should depend on whether the expected benefits of a center outweigh the expected costs by three to one, because there will be many unexpected costs and impediments along the way.

Christine Moorman, Duke University, addressed her experience as department chair and working as part of a committee which conducted a search to fill a dean's position. She believes that professional leadership positions allow people to meet a variety of people and make a contribution to younger scholars and Ph.D. students, and to have an impact that can be quite high. The work can be very rewarding and one can gain new knowledge and different skills.

Tom Robertson, University of Pennsylvania, discussed his role as dean, and some of the successes and failures that one might encounter when serving this role. Dr. Robertson stated that some of the reasons why one would accept a deanship are because it is part of a career path and one can shape policy and contribute to the university. Some success factors include getting along with the faculty, having a vision, figuring out how to position the school, and raising money. Some of the challenges associated with being a dean include that the average dean lasts three years in the position, some academics cannot be managed, and that as a dean one loses the ability to research, which makes it hard to get back on a research track.

Russ Winer, New York University, discussed the different perspectives that emerge when it comes to service, and some reasons why one should move into administration. Faculty see themselves as entrepreneurs who want to manage their time and choose their activities. The administration has “fixed costs” and organizational goals to achieve, so there are things that need to get done and people are needed to do them. Some reasons why one would choose to move into administration include institutional loyalty and commitment, diversification of activities, agent of change, the faculty life cycle, and a desire to become dean or ultimately move into a university position.