



# Management and Leadership

Hank Levy

Chair, Computer Science & Engineering

University of Washington

# Me

- I worked in industry for 10 years (DEC)
- I've been at UW for > 30 years
- I've been chair of UW CSE for 10+ years
  
- Being chair is the best gig I've ever had
- Chairs have the opportunity to have big impact on a department (positive or negative 😊)
  
- What will be *your* impact?

# Management

- You are the CEO of a business
- Management is taking care of all of the business processes so that your faculty can be productive
- You will need lots of help from faculty, staff, etc.
- But your goal is to make lots of the management function invisible to most of the department so they can focus on their jobs
- Your job as chair is to make others successful!

# Yearly Management Cycle

- There are a set of yearly tasks that consume much of your time as chair, e.g.:
  - Promotion and Tenure
  - Faculty hiring
  - Budgeting/raises/financial stuff
  - Educational program management and organization
- These are predictable and cyclic – try to plan for them -- and use them to carry out your agenda
- Create organizational structure/processes to help
- Offload to professional staff where possible
- Use people's interests and skills to your advantage

# Leadership

- Leadership is defining the directions/vision/priorities for your department
- What are your goals?
  - Update the curriculum?
  - Teach more students?
  - Increase diversity?
  - Build a new building?
  - Create a new research center?
  - Grow your faculty?
  - Increase research or institutional funding?
  - Build industrial interactions?
- Define your priorities early – it will be harder later (or you'll never get to it)
- You have to lead change without doing it all yourself!

# Leading and Communicating

- You need to conceptualize, express, and communicate your vision, your goals, and the culture you want
- You need to incentivize people to follow you:
  - Use teaching release, TAs, staff support, food, ...
- You need to continue to talk about what's important to you until people complain that you're talking too much 😊
- Dictatorship doesn't work – you need to convince people that what you want is best for them and the department – and to get buy-in.
- You will never get 100% support – just live with it.

# “Managing up”

- You need the support of the Dean, Provost, and others above you
- Make sure they know who you are
- You need to educate them about computing and why it is important to the future of the university
- Give them the data: demand, growth, impact, etc.
- Invite them to see exciting research and great students. Keep them informed about successes.
- You want them to think that your success is their success.
- Use your advocates: local industry, influential alumni, profs in other departments, advisory boards, students, your Uncle Bill, ...

# Your mantra 😊

- Repeat after me:
  - “You cannot have a strong university in this century without strong computer science at its core”
  - blah blah blah (your part here) 😊



# Professional/Administrative Staff

- Your staff carry out tasks that are financial, administrative, technical, research, fundraising, ...
- They make your department work and help you and the faculty to do your jobs better
- *Make sure your faculty and students treat them with respect*
- Staff stability (and quality) is important to your success
- Leadership change is VERY stressful for staff – make them feel loved ASAP.

# Personal development

- None of us is perfect
- We all have strengths and weaknesses
- Learn to use your strengths and improve on your weaknesses
- Learn to separate you “the person” from you “the chair”
- Get help/advice if you need it: former chairs, mentors, senior faculty members, friends, consultants, management classes

# Money Money Money

- You can't do anything without money
- Figure out how to become stronger financially
  - Raise money from gifts
  - Convince the university to increase your budget
  - Get corporate support
  - Create self-sustaining educational programs
  - Etc.
- Even small amounts of discretionary funding can have a big impact

# Random Thoughts

- Be patient – it takes time to think things through
- What you say as chair carries weight – be careful what you say (in email or in person)
- Fairness is important – you need to be fair despite your feelings for people
- Reserve time to think about what you care about or you'll be consumed by daily chores
- You can't do everything, pick a few things that are doable
- Keep your head in academics that you enjoy – e.g., research or teaching – it keeps you balanced

# Finally....

- What are your goals?
- What is your legacy?

# Example Data

