One CIO's Lessons on Leadership

Larry Conrad

AVC-IT and CIO

UC Berkeley

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Key Leadership Concepts to Grasp

- You are <u>not</u> in the technology business
- …you're in the customer service business
- This is partnership business
- This is a relationship business
- This is a personal business
- Stay in touch with your customers
- Building trust and credibility is everything
- You're in marketing
- Know what can get you fired!

Customer Service

- IT does not create business value
- …your customers create business value
- Your job: help your customers succeed
- Your goal: deliver excellent customer service at all times
- This will not necessarily come naturally to your IT staff…
- You need to engage with staff about what excellent customer service looks like in your world
- Work to infuse this into the culture of the IT organization

Partnership

- Your customers have to believe you are as committed to their success as they are…be "all in"
- They need to believe you are a true member of their team
- Do the right thing in every situation
- Be a true partner they can trust to deliver what they need when they need it
- That includes helping them find creative alternatives when you can't meet their needs
- When additional resources are needed, go together to executive management to sell the request (see "marketing" below)

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Personal Relationships

- One of the great things about higher ed is that one person <u>can</u> make a big difference
- Your customers will not come to you because you are the central IT organization
- They will not come to you because you provide the services they need
- They will come to you because <u>you</u> have a positive track record
- They will come to you because <u>you</u> have credibility
- They will come to you because they trust <u>you</u>

Stay in Touch

- As noted, this is a personal relationship business
- Make sure your customer management know who you are
- Make sure you know who they are
- Understand their drivers and concerns
- Understand their needs
- Periodically checkpoint
- Don't rely entirely on your staff to get the straight scoop… go find out yourself
- Always remember you're part of the Help Desk!

Trust and Credibility

- Your customers know how dependent they are on technology
- …that's why distributed IT organizations exist
- They have "bet the farm" on technology and will only use your services if they are absolutely confident you're the best solution
- Your track-record is what matters
  - Establish SLAs…and regularly exceed them!
  - Be honest about what you can do and can't do

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Marketing

- You <u>are</u> in marketing…get over it!
- "If you build it they will come" or central edicts will not work
- You have to tell your story…don't assume they know
  - What services you provide…and how these can solve their problems
  - what's your track-record…what are the costs…who else is using
- Distributed IT leaders are a key target market
  - Engage with them…woo them…win them over
  - They are your partners in delivering IT services to campus
  - You need to become their trusted partner
- Adopt the language and practices of marketing
  - "Customers"…"focus groups"…"market analysis"…"marketing materials"…"incentives"

Know What Can Get you Fired

As a CIO, here's my list:

- Failure of a major project…think ERP
- Major—particularly repetitive—security exposures
- Fiscal mis-management…"follow the money"
- Arrogance
- Neglecting your Day Job
  …being seduced by the "national presence"

Here it is: Your Moment of Zen!

- A good sense of humor is a tremendous career skill
  - What we do is serious as a heat attack
  - …but don't have one while you're doing it!

- "Be Here Now:" be all-in committed to your role
  - But knowing when it's time to leave is also a key career skill
  - Recognize when it's time to move on and leave on your terms

- Stay balanced
  - Let go of ego
  - Let go of anger

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Questions?