AIEA
Leaders in International Higher Education

AIEA 2014 Annual Conference
February 16-19, 2014
Washington, DC

UNIVERSALIZING GLOBAL LEARNING IN THE 21ST-CENTURY ACADEMY

Managing the SIO Role: Self, Superiors, and Subordinates

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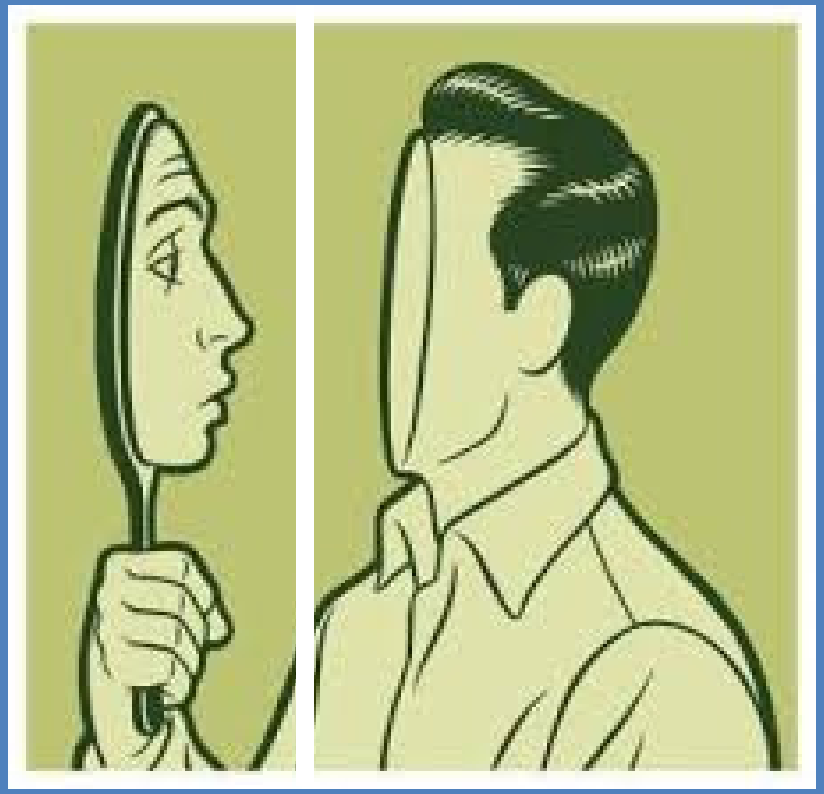
What Is Your Role?



Competencies for Effective Leadership in Higher Education (2007)

Attitudes

- Self-aware
- Flexible
- Open
- Honest
- Discreet
- Visible, outgoing
- Willing to be wrong/accept advice/support
- Sensitive to the views of others

Knowledge

- Knowledge of university life
- Understand how the university system works
- Understand academic processes

Behavior

- Work to maintain academic credibility/respect
- Act as role models
- Think broadly/strategically
- Engage with people
- Listen to others
- Consult with others
- Negotiate
- Communicate clearly
- Delegate
- Motivate others
- Act as mentors
- Build teams

Spendlove, M. (2007). Competencies for effective leadership in higher education. *International Journal of Educational Management, 5*, 407–417.

Critical Skills and Knowledge for Senior Campus International Leaders (2007)

Personal Qualities

Diplomacy & tact
Practical/effective
Imagination
Flexibility
Patience
Listening
Humor
Energy/Passion
Ethics

Functional Skills

Communication
Teamwork
HR Mgmt
Management
Organizing
Technology/ Computer
Delegation
Prioritizing

Background Knowledge

Academic background
Knowledge of geography/history
Overseas experience
How local/regional community works
Administrative experience

Specialized Skills

Cross-cultural skills
Finance/Budgets
Strategic Planning
Policy, Program & Project Mgmt.
Advocacy
Leadership
Fundraising
Negotiation
Media and PR
Research
Conflict Management
Change Management

Specialized Knowledge

Knowledge of Home Institution
US Gov't Policies
International Affairs
International Office services
International Education
US Higher Education
Global Higher Education

Lambert, S., Nolan, R., Peterson, N., & Pierce, D. (2007). Critical skills and knowledge for senior campus international leader. *Report of the Task Force on Skills and Competencies of the NAFSA International Education Leadership Knowledge Community, NAFSA.*

A Survey of Senior International Officers: Individual and Institutional Profiles (2012)

Knowledge

Knowledge of international issues
Knowledge of world affairs
Business principles and practices
Cross-cultural theories and methods

Skills

Interpersonal
Planning/vision
Intercultural competence

Experiences

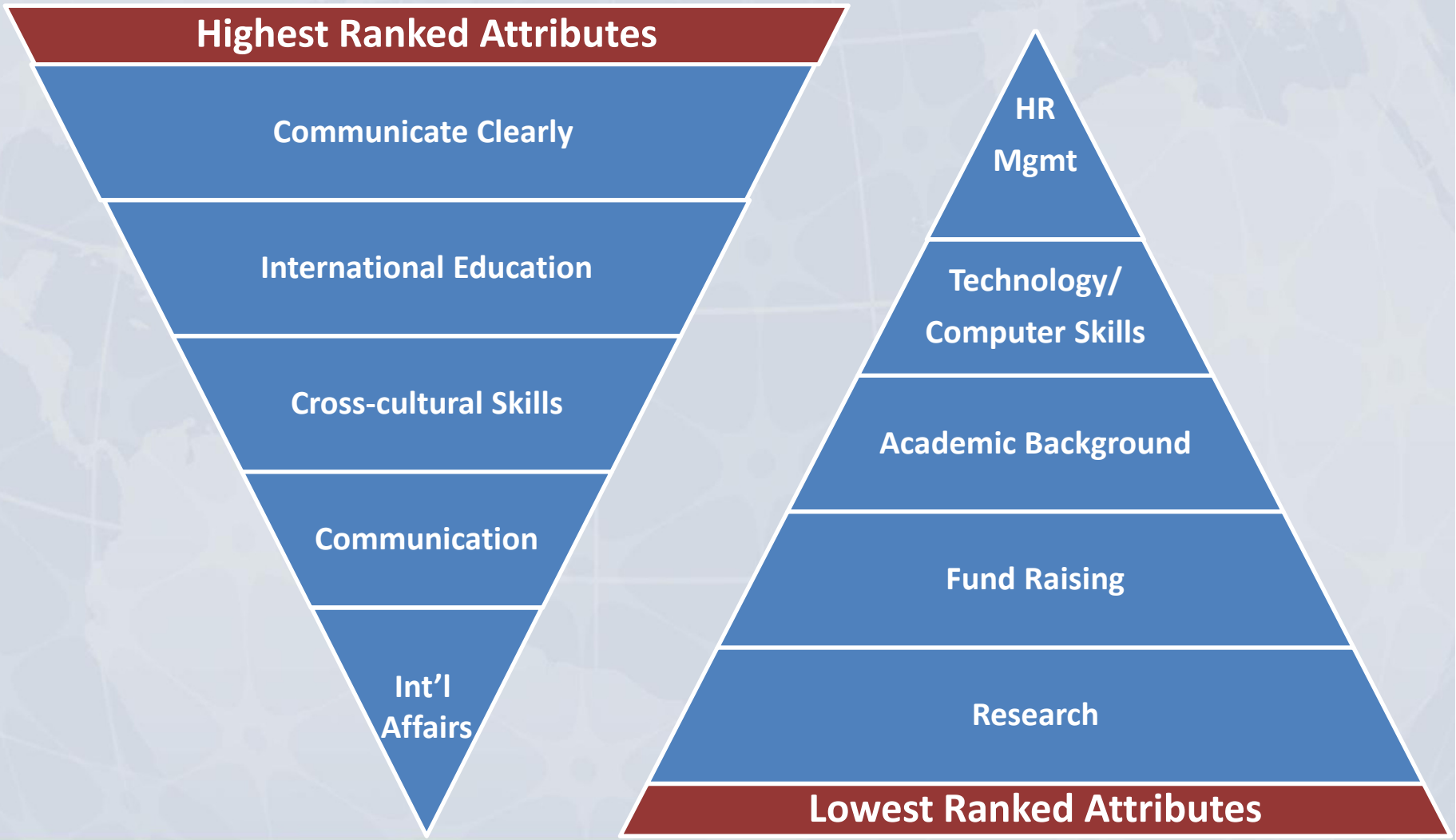
Organizational Management
Academic Administration
Budget Management
Overseas living experience

Personal Characteristics

Vision
Energy/Passion
Flexibility
Creativity
Entrepreneurship

Kwai, C. K., & Deardorff, D. K. (2012) A survey of senior international officers: Individual and institutional profiles. Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA). http://www.aieaworld.org/assets/docs/Surveys/2011siosurveyexecutivesummaryfinaldraft5b15djune2012.pdf

Subordinates Perceptions of Critical Skills and Knowledge for Senior International Officers (2013)



Subordinates Perceptions of Critical Skills and Knowledge for Senior International Officers (2013)

What can an SIO do to help Staff?

- **Mentoring and Support:** Desires guidance or help with particular issues.
- **Be a Leader/Good Manager:** Develop a clear vision, set strategic plan, include staff in decision making, and make good hires.
- **Let Staff Do their Jobs**: Not micro-managing.
- **Be an Advocate:** Advocate for the office in the larger university and externally.
- **Professional Development:** Train and develop staff, provide opportunities for advancement.
- **Communicate:** Communicate often and clearly, teamwork, listening, being open and transparent, sharing knowledge, etc.
- **Fundraise:** Self-explanatory

Turner, P. K. (2013) New Senior International Officers (SIOs): What to Know, Who to Know (Including Yourself). Permission needed to cite.

Clarifying Your Role and Managing from the Middle

Case Studies

Clarifying Role Expectations: SIO lacks clear role definition

Elaine recently started her new position as SIO at a public, research 1 university. She is excited about crafting a vision and developing plans aimed at comprehensive internationalization. After assessing the university's internationalization trajectory, Elaine concludes that previous SIOs were most often seen as leaders in increasing international student enrollment and in growing study abroad participation. Elaine took the SIO position, in part, because upper-level administrators so enthusiastically voiced their support for her leadership of internationalization, broadly defined. They were impressed by her successful track record leading campus and curriculum internationalization and international partnership development. Elaine has soon discovered however that her role in governance structures, resource allocation decisions, committee leadership, etc. remains unclear. To successfully develop and implement a bold internationalization strategy, Elaine must first clarify her SIO role.

- Who are the various stakeholders who define this position?
- How does each perceive the SIO's role and responsibilities? What are the similarities and differences?
- What challenges must be faced in the absence of clear role definition?
- What steps could be taken to clarify that role? What performance standards could be set?
- Given your discussion, what skills or knowledge do you feel you need as an SIO? What steps will you take to achieve those?

Manage from the Middle: Introduction of a global learning initiative to superior and subordinate stakeholders

Jack has been asked by his boss to enhance the university's internationalization efforts by introducing a global learning initiative. This initiative must provide meaningful international experiences for the 90 percent of students who do not participate in a study abroad program during their undergraduate experience. Jack has worked hard to craft an initiative that increases opportunity for development of global competence, both inside and outside the classroom. He thinks there may even be opportunity to connect with minority groups off campus, furthering embedding the global learning in real-world challenges and opportunities. Jack knows this initiative challenges how some define global learning. To successfully carry out this initiative, Jack must harness a network of stakeholders.

- Who are the various stakeholders who define the SIO position?
- How does each perceive Jack's role and responsibilities? What are the similarities and differences?
- What challenges must be faced in "selling" the global learning initiative?
- How should Jack present or advocate for the global learning initiative to his superiors? to his administrative peers (other Director level administrators, for example)? to his subordinates?
- Given your discussion, what skills or knowledge do you feel you need as an SIO? What steps will you take to achieve those?

Recovering From Failure I

"[F]ailure is not an objective fact, but a subjective opinion, a judgment about events. Almost everyone will 'fail' at some point. And all . . . will be able to recover."

- Riall Nolan, Purdue University

Recovering From Failure II

Kinds of "Failures": Cosmic Forces vs. Professional Failures vs. Professional Mistake

Cosmic Forces - Factors outside your control: Key players leave (superiors, subordinates or peer allies), campus realignment puts international unit under unsupportive boss, grant program is suspended, campus crisis pushes all other issues to the side, campus budget stalls; etc.

Professional Mistake – Usually the result of some oversight or hasty decision. Failed to include a key stakeholder in a key meeting; failure to alert a subordinate to key change in his/her work assignment; etc.

Professional Failure - Factors within your control: Lapses in communication with key stakeholders (see Cases 1 and 2); failure to build a network of support for an idea/initiative; failure to intervene in a staff issue that is crippling unit morale; failure to be transparent with key stakeholders on likely cost/impact of new program; etc.

Recovering from Failure*:

Identify the reason for the failure – Perform a clear-eyed review of recent events, validate your interpretation with colleagues.

Assess your assets - Personal (knowledge/experience/temperament, family/friends), campus allies, professional colleagues, unit staff, options for career move.

Assess your liabilities - Was the failure a result of a deficit in judgment/knowledge/interpersonal/intercultural skills? Limitations on career move.

Learn from failure - Learn about yourself and your professional/personal situation; make amends (learn humility); don't seek revenge.

Seek outside support – Gain perspective through professional network/mentors/counseling.

Move on! Everyone fails, but there are always new opportunities – sometimes in the same institution, sometimes at other institutions, sometimes in a completely different career path.

*Robert J. Sternberg, "Coping with a Career Crisis," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 27, 2014.

Recovering From Failure III

"There is no such thing as failure. . . . Failure is just life trying to move us in another direction."

Oprah Winfrey to the Harvard Class of 2013

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