

# **DEALING WITH DEANS**

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# COMPLICATED RELATIONSHIP

- Chairs serve at the pleasure of the dean
- Deans control chairs' evaluation, salary, etc.
- Deans control resources to departments

Bottom line: You can't afford to have a bad relationship with your dean



# **EMPOWERMENT: DEAN DEPENDS ON YOUR SUCCESS**

Deans need to impress their “bosses”

- serve at the pleasure of the provost/president

- judged by effectiveness in meeting goals

- most importantly – a flourishing, successful college

Success of a college depends on the success of its departments

Effective chairs are critical for successful departments



# 10 TOP TEN

**TIPS FOR BUILDING EFFECTIVE  
RELATIONSHIPS WITH DEANS**



# #1

## DO YOUR HOMEWORK

- Find out what are the priorities of your dean?
  - What did the dean do before being named your dean?
  - What does your dean want to accomplish?
    - Career aspirations?
    - What expectations does the Provost have of the dean?
- Align priorities to benefit your unit





## # 2 COMMUNICATION IS KEY

- What's your dean's preferred mode of communication?
- How frequently does your dean want to hear from you?
- Be very careful what you “say” in public records





# # 3

## BE THE BEARER OF GOOD NEWS

Keep your dean informed of successes in your unit

Regularly (e.g., monthly “good news” email)

Reflects well on you and your unit

Helps your dean: “Pearls” to share with others

When you have SPECTACULAR news

Make sure the dean is the 1<sup>ST</sup> to know

Make sure the dean hears it from you







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## # 4

# NEVER LET YOUR DEAN BE BLINDSIDED

How much of your “dirty laundry” should you share with your dean?

How do you prevent your dean from being blindsided?

Need to find the right balance

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## # 5 USE THE DEAN'S TIME WISELY

- Send an agenda in advance of the meeting
- Come to the meeting prepared (data, spreadsheets, etc.)
- Be clear about your desired outcome





## # 6 DON'T LET YOUR BUDGET GO IN THE “RED”

Headed for a budget shortfall?

- Alert your dean ASAP
- Provide a detailed explanation
- Have a plan for getting back in the black



## # 7

# PRESENT YOUR DEAN IN A GOOD LIGHT

- Foster positive relationships between your dean and your faculty
- Highlight the ways in which your dean supports your unit
- Dean as “fall guy” – only if you give them a heads up



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**# 8**

## **PUT SOME SKIN IN THE GAME**

- **Contribute some of your own resources – shows this is a top priority**
- **Be clear about expected ROI**



# # 9

## TRUST (AND CREATE A RECORD)

- Conclude meetings by summarizing agreements, next steps
- Follow-up with an email: “Thanks for your time and for agreeing to.....”



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# # 10

## KEEP THE DEAN'S CONFIDENCES

- NEVER share information that was intended only for you
- Even if you hear it from someone else – don't reveal a confidence
- If it's not clear – ask!





# **BUILDING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH DEANS**

**QUESTIONS?**

**THANKS!**