

SOME KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL PRESIDENCY: LESSONS LEARNED

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**Notes for presentation to AALI 21st Century Leadership Institute for Provosts
and Chief Academic Officers: 2009-2010 Academic Year**

Washington, D.C.

August 6, 2009

- 1. The things that have to this point in your career as a chief academic officer occupied most of your attention will require only a fraction of your time as a president—academics. There is a profound shift from direct leadership of academics to a supportive and monitoring role. If you become a president, DO NOT TRY TO TAKE THE VPAA/PROVOST PORTFOLIO WITH YOU.**

- 2. To this point in your career you have not experienced a direct counterpart to the board-president relationship. You have already had a presentation on this topic, but let me share an observation or two:**

A board member is not the board.

There is a world of difference between a public and a private board.

KNOW your board or you will be a short-timer in office.

- 3. Be a serious student of the institution you are selected to lead: (Use example form Texas A&M University-Kingsville)**

History

Traditions/folklore

Values/norms

Sacred cows

[Not just as means of avoiding mistakes, but as a means of identifying degrees of freedom and points of leverage.]

- 4. A key aspect of the president's role is that of institutional storyteller. Learn to be good at it! It's not a throw-away aspect of the job!**
- 5. Your institution will never think more boldly or more creatively that does its president. Remember this: The ability to float downstream is not an indicator of leadership, but the ability to read the currents and thereby navigate in whatever direction that is required is at least one such indicator. Most institutions are looking for presidents who are leaders, not chief maintenance officers.**
- 6. If you have an overwhelming need to be loved by everyone, do both yourself and the academy a favor and seek another line of work. Instead of being loved by everyone, strive to be respected by all—fundamentally that hinges on integrity.**