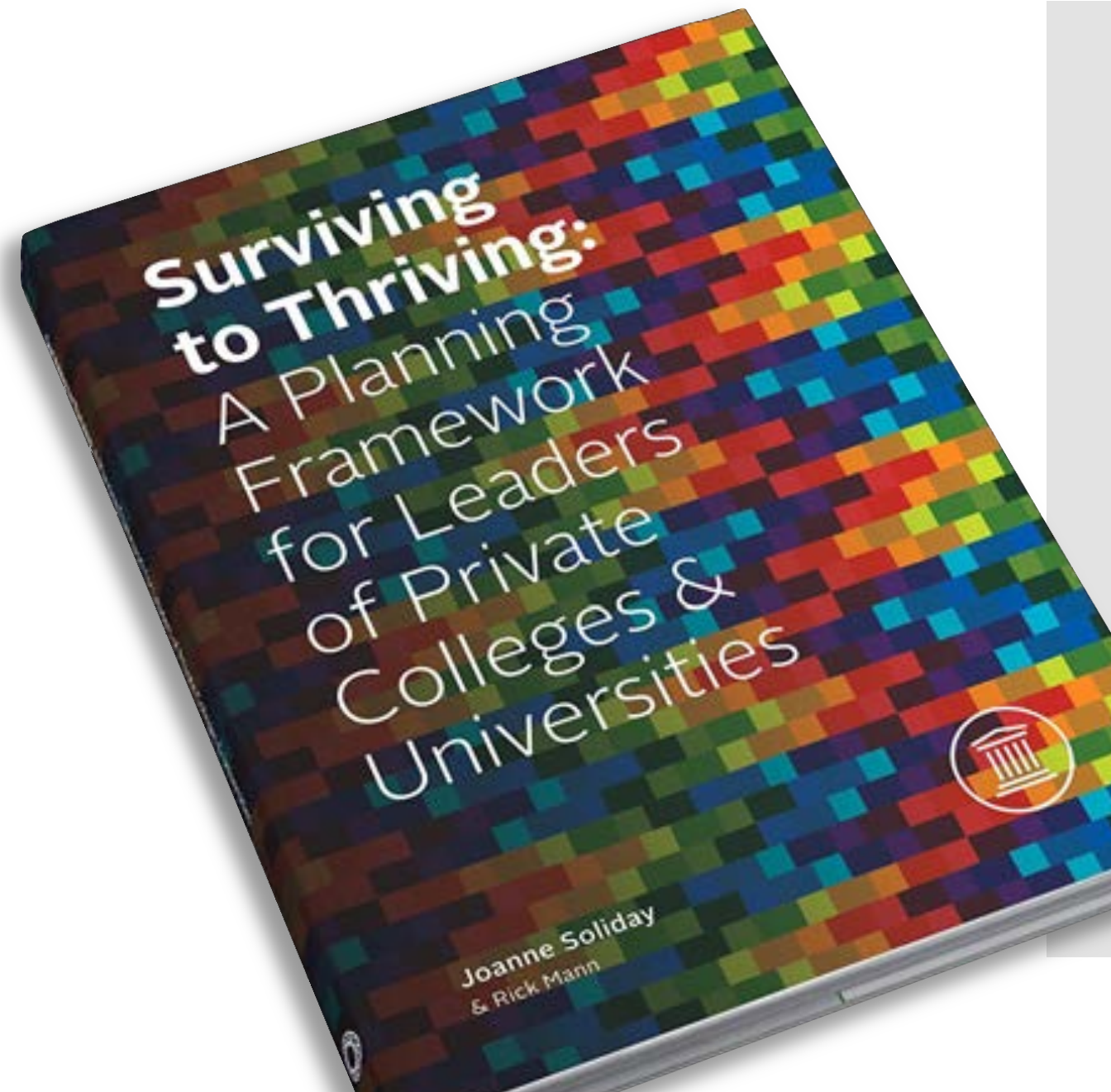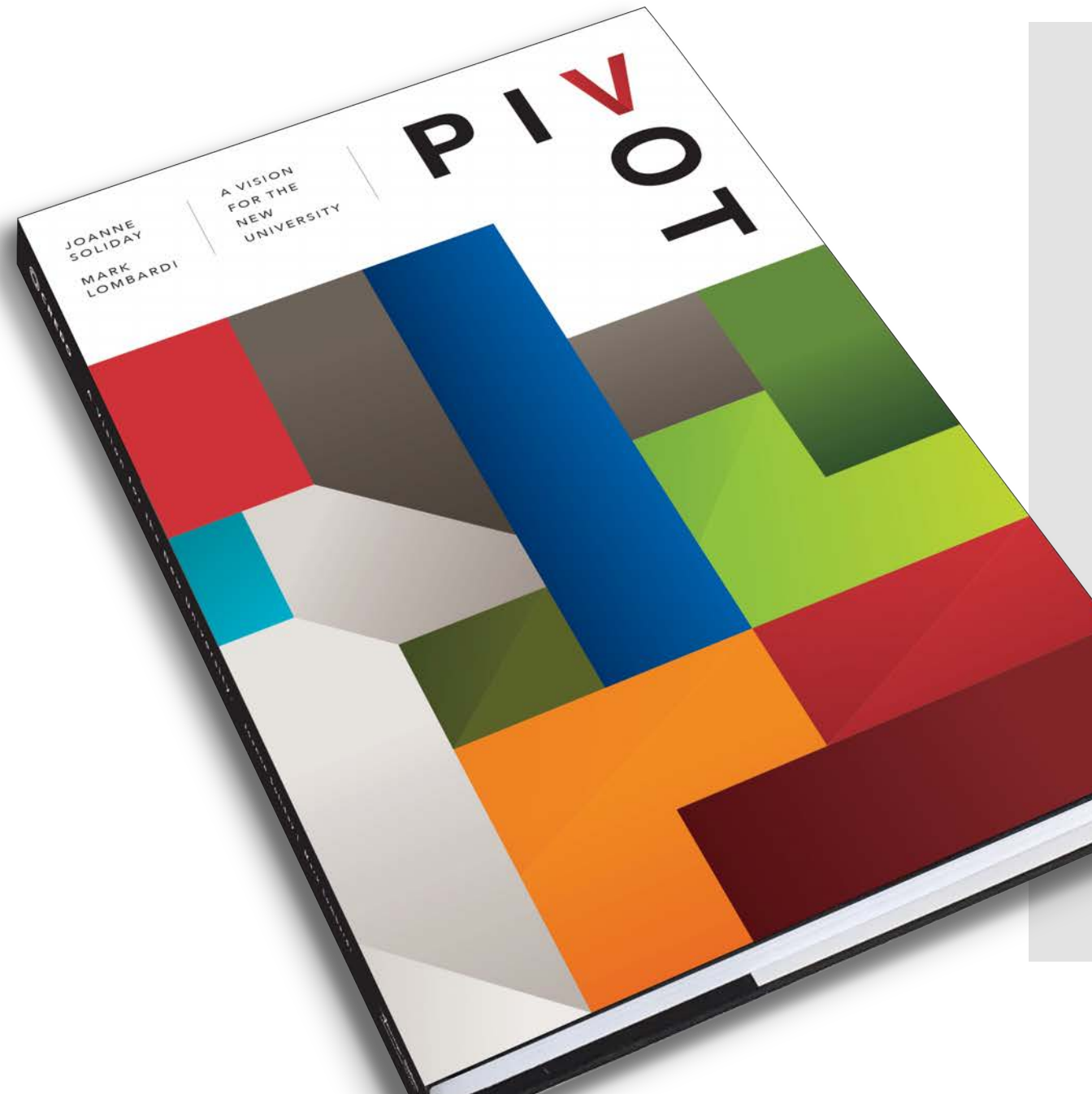# CREDO

Roundtable on Leadership Longevity & Institutional Culture

CIC Presidents Institute 2023

We wrote the book on institutional thriving for higher education...

Surviving to Thriving:
A Planning Framework for Leaders of Private Colleges & Universities

Joanne Soliday & Rick Mann

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And a book on institutional change in higher education...

PIVOT

A VISION FOR THE NEW UNIVERSITY

JOANNE SOLIDAY

MARK LOMBARDI

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Both of these books informed and evolved our Thriving Framework for Colleges and Universities

Student Learning & Success

Net Revenue & Strategic Finance

Highly-Valued People & Community

Proven Value Propositions

Learning-Focused Environments
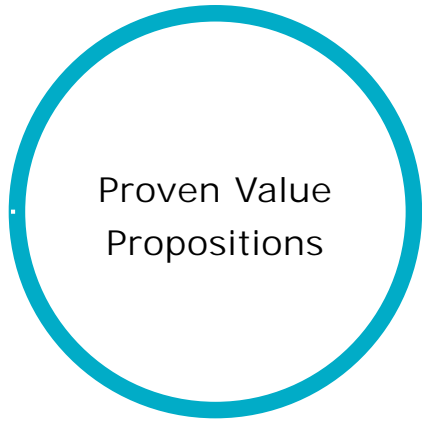
WHERE thriving institutions focus their energy

The Thriving Framework (2.0)

HOW thriving institutions do their work

Compelling Vision

Culture of Planning & Strategic Risk

Courageous & Collaborative Leadership

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Leadership does not exist in a vacuum:

National/Global Economic, Social, Cultural, Political Climate

Local/Regional Economic, Social, & Cultural Context

Your Institution

You in Your Role/Team

Your Leadership

And the landscape of higher education is complex and challenging.

- Talent War
- Shifting Workforce Demands
- National Ideological Divide
- Business Model Challenges
- Cost & Affordability
- Rising Discount Rates
- Student Mental Health
- Declining TUG Enrollment
- Changing Demographics
- Pace/Volume of Change
- Leadership Turnover
- Demand for Inclusive Leadership
- Challenge to Value Proposition
- Unbundling
- Micro-credentials
- Competency-Based Education

- Shared Governance
- Drop in National Retention Averages
- Pandemic Impact on Student Learning & Readiness
- Ransomware Attacks
- Link to Career Readiness
- Regulatory Uncertainty
- Accreditation Demands
- Global Exhaustion

Higher Ed Landscape

So we're wondering…

- How does presidential leadership impact institutional and student success?

- As the average presidential tenure continues to drop, what helps leaders stay?

- What factors contribute most significantly to thriving for college and university presidents?

Considering Leadership Longevity

Through our daily work with campuses and deep partnerships with university presidents, Credo has been thinking more and more about the role of sustained leadership in institutional and student success. With average presidential tenure continuing to drop, colleges and universities around the country are grappling with the impact of frequent leadership changes that often negatively impact institutional alignment, execution of vision, and ability to undertake transformational change, and result in cultural stagnation and flagging student outcomes. To underpin the focus of this book, Credo is undertaking a qualitative research project to explore the ***factors that contribute most significantly to leadership longevity and institutional thriving***. This research will consider such issues as the symbiotic relationship between president and institutional culture, the alignment of their own leadership passion and energy with an individual college or university context, and the critical components of the board's relationship to the president in nurturing longevity.

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[Some] Factors Contributing to Leadership Sustainability

President + Board

Determining institutional fit

Onboarding

A clear charge

Equitable compensation

Board structure

Board engagement

Board development

Presidential support

Board Chair relationship

President + Personhood

Personal support systems

Leadership style awareness

Energy management

Health & Stamina

Clear "why"

Alignment of personal identity with institutional values and culture

President + Culture

Power dynamics

Shared governance

Institutional trust

Risk & change tolerance

Accessibility

Visibility

Constituent engagement

President + Cabinet

Ability to shape the team

Willingness to fire fast

Strong seconds in each functional area

Leaders beyond silos

"Team A" mentality

Conflict tolerant, change ready

[Some] Factors Contributing to Leadership Sustainability

President + Board

- Determining institutional fit
- Onboarding
- A clear charge
- Equitable compensation
- Board structure
- Board engagement
- Board development
- Presidential support
- Board Chair relationship

- Is THIS leader right for THIS institution in THIS period of time?
- Did the Board shape a rich and effective onboarding program for the new leader?
- Was the charge to the president clear and transparent? Does the board know where the skeletons in the closets are, and were they shared with the leader?
- Is the board structured for appropriate action and contribution, engaged in effective execution of their role, and continuously developed to understand the higher education landscape?
- Does the board stand in full support of the leader it hired?
- Is the relationship between the Board Chair and President positive and open?

[Some] Factors Contributing to Leadership Sustainability

President + Personhood

- Personal support systems
- Leadership style awareness
- Energy management
- Health & Stamina
- Clear "why"
- Alignment of personal identity with institutional values and culture

- What personal support systems does the president have?
- Does the president understand their leadership style and consider what gaps their cabinet needs to fill?
- How does the leader manage their energy, time, health, and stamina?
- Does the leader have a clear and present "why" that anchors their work through challenge?
- How closely does the leader's personal identity align with institutional values and culture?

[Some] Factors Contributing to Leadership Sustainability

President + Culture

- Power dynamics
- Shared governance
- Institutional trust
- Risk & change tolerance
- Accessibility
- Visibility
- Constituent engagement

- Are power and influence exercised responsibly by the president, cabinet, board, and faculty leadership?

- Does the campus community have trust in leadership?

- Is there a willingness to take risks and experiment with change within the campus community?

- Does the president have a healthy mix of accessibility to constituents and visibility across the community?

- Are all key constituents engaged effectively in the strategic direction of the institution?

[Some] Factors Contributing to Leadership Sustainability

President + Cabinet

- Ability to shape the team
- Willingness to fire fast
- Strong seconds in each functional area
- Leaders beyond silos
- "Team A" mentality
- Conflict tolerant, change ready

- Does the president have the ability, both with the strength of their own assessment of team members' performance and with the support of the Board, to shape their team in the best interest of institutional needs?

- Is the president willing to have hard conversations in the shaping of that team?

- Can each cabinet member serve strategically because they are supported by a strong second carrying the translation of strategy to operations?

- Does the cabinet serve as campuswide leaders, recognizing that their first accountability is to their cabinet team and second to their functional area?

- Can the cabinet navigate conflict in healthy ways, and are they intentionally developing their capacity for change leadership?