



Leadership Insights & Research

CIC State Councils 2025

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Current Trends in Recruitment

- Length of stay for all positions is decreasing
- Campuses have to do a lot more “selling” than they used to
- Leadership is so critical; but it is trauma led leadership
- There is no greener pastures, safe place to land
- Candidate behavior is pretty bad
- Lots of pools remain robust and people are seeking opportunity

Current Trends in Leadership

- People know what to do, just not where they are going
- Generational shift in leadership is occurring
- Talented professionals feel isolated in the work
- So many feel a path forward for them in leadership is not right or will be possible
- Even so, there are good people, doing good things, to further democracy and care for our students



2024 **Competencies for the College Presidency**

A NATIONAL STUDY OF EFFECTIVE
LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The Study Featured

- Research by Drs. Kevin R. McClure and Jorge Burmicky
- 792 current presidents surveyed online with questions in the following areas:
 - Leadership Qualities or Abilities
 - Institutional Management Skills
 - Knowledge Areas to Be Effective
 - Knowledge Areas Leadership Programs Should Prioritize
- Four focus groups with current presidents at AASCU and CIC president meeting

7 Key Competencies Identified

- Trust-Building
- Demonstrating Resilience
- Communication Savvy
- Crafting a Cabinet and Team Building
- Emotional Intelligence
- Leading with Courage
- Data Acumen and Resource Management

Notable Differences by Gender and Race

Women were much more likely than men to indicate that demonstrating a commitment to equity-mindedness and weighing the consequences of decisions on different groups are very relevant.

Presidents of Color were more likely than White presidents to indicate help-seeking and recognizing how emotions impact other people as very relevant.

Presidents of Color vs White presidents and women vs males were more likely to respond they needed mastery of specific knowledge areas to be effective at their institution.

Demonstrating Resilience

- Coping with adversity and demonstrating resilience was frequently rated as very important by survey respondents (92%)
- Focus group participants discussed how their resilience is a product of leaning on teams and networks of friends, family, mentors, and faith communities. Not a solo project, but rather a product of *relationships*.

“Isolation is very real in this role...my situation is unique because I’m in a very small institution in a very small world community...so having that network to reach out to in times of need is critical.”

Reframing Resilience

- **It's Not Just Grit—It's Strategic Adaptation**
 - Individualism to Interdependence
 - Heroics to Sustainability
- **Leading Through Ambiguity with Clarity**
 - Perfectionism to Progress
 - Values, Vision, and Where You Stand
- **Rediscovering Purpose: The Antidote to Burnout**
 - Creating Psychological Safety
 - Mission and Finding Your Why

Personal Resilience Toolkit

Toolkit elements:

- Mindfulness and reflection
- Executive coaching and peer networks
- Care for your support network
- Boundaries and time management
- Physical well-being and routines
- Growth mindset and self-compassion
- Create outlets and joyful distraction
- Digital discipline
- Gratitude practices

Table Workshop

First, what do you need to add to your personal resiliency toolkit?

Table share on toolkits and helping others build their toolkit.

Crafting a Leadership Team

- One of the top institutional management skills rated as very important was building a collaborative cabinet and empowering it to make progress on institutional goals
- All participants credited their success to having a cabinet they can trust. Relying on cabinet members who possess skills that they do not have was a common theme.

“My advice to a new president would be get the cabinet you need right away.”

Leadership Team Building

- Hire for values and capacity, not just credentials
- There is no perfect candidate
- Recognize we have always wanted unicorns
- Refocus on transitioning and onboarding
- Focus on complementary skills
- Continuous support and development, individual and team

Leadership Team Needs

- How do we create belonging in the selection process?
- Is selection a gracious process or an episode of Survivor?
- Who really is responsible for a caring process?
- You can be caring, respectful, and run a great process.
- Who takes care of creating belonging during the onboarding process?
- Do we have a transition process?

Table Discussion

What are your thoughts on
improving the process of
creating your leadership team
and fostering resiliency?



Thank You!!!

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Download the Study



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