

CHAPTER 11

MANAGING CHANGE IN AN IWP: IDENTITY, LEADERSHIP STYLE AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

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The university is so many things to so many people that it must, of necessity, be partially at war with itself.

—Clark Kerr, *The Use of the University* (p. 243)

In academic culture communication is often the agent of change. Through communication—conversations, announcements, emails, meetings, university publications, websites, brochures—new realities are created, disseminated, interpreted and, in the process, changed. “Producing intentional change,” observe Jeffrey Ford and Laura Ford, “is a matter of deliberately bringing into existence, through communication, a new reality or set of social structures” (1995, p. 542).

In a perfect world, the creation of an independent writing program (IWP) would be generated, planned, constructed, and communicated collaboratively by its various stakeholders. (See Everett; Lalicker; and Rhoades et al., this volume, for various views of these attempts.) However, such a situation is rare. More typically the launching of or a major change to an IWP is a top-down affair that focuses more on implementation than communication. Yet how that change is communicated will create the conditions of the IWP’s reception and its relationship to other departments, programs, and individuals for years to come.

I began my work on this chapter by exploring how best to prevent the kinds of antagonistic relationships often triggered by the creation of an IWP when it separates from an English or other host department. To this end, I reviewed the literature on change management and interviewed 12 administrators of IWPs located in the United States and Canada, all of whom were guaranteed anonymity. In phone and personal interviews that ranged between 45 minutes and two hours, I asked them to discuss the history of their program’s founding and how it had changed over the years, their staffing and relationships with other

departments and stakeholders, their leadership styles and responsibilities, and their communication and planning strategies throughout. We talked about their successes and errors, and the advice they would give to founding directors of new IWPs or those in the midst of strife. Most administrators I interviewed were successful founding directors who headed the programs they had created; a few were “semi-founding” directors, if you will, in that they had replaced the original founding director who had quit or was ousted. A few were “GenAdmins,” a second or third generation removed from the founding director of their programs (Charlton, Charlton, Graban, Ryan & Stolley, 2011).

A number of the interviewed shared hair-raising accounts of what can best be characterized as workplace bullying by members of the department from which their programs had separated. What was most remarkable about these stories was their consistency despite significant differences between leadership styles, backgrounds, locations, and institutional size and type (for histories of difficult separations, see Chapman, 1995; Doherty, 2006; Ianetta, 2010; Maid, 2006; Pettipiece & Everett, 2013). In Writing Studies we are inclined to remark the importance of the local in terms of everything from pedagogy to management, but in these situations the local didn't seem to be the problem, despite that the targeted WPAs were often made to feel that they were being singled out because of their particular credentials, personalities, leadership styles, conduct. What gradually emerged was that this pattern of targeting WPAs was anything but local. It was an institutional response, a defense mechanism built into the bureaucratic culture of universities. Members of a bureaucracy fight off a perceived threat to their autonomy and authority by discrediting and thus eliminating the threat.

Equally remarkable was how amicable relationships were for the GenAdmins interviewed who stepped into established programs as well as for founding directors whose programs had been built from scratch (not moved out of a department) or had created the IWP in collaboration with key stakeholders. These situations, along with those of longstanding founders of successful programs, point to how a rocky start can be overcome with staying power, productive identity-building, careful planning, and good communication strategies. These counter-examples also suggest that there are ways to avoid or mitigate the effects of setting off the “seek and destroy” mechanism of the institutional bureaucracy triggered by that to which it is most constitutively and justifiably averse: change.

In this chapter, through interviews and knowledge gleaned from the growing field of organizational change management, and my own experience as a founding director of an IWP, I intend to provide a kind of map of key considerations for readers who are contemplating creating an IWP or making a significant change to one. As a synthesis of personal experience as well as field-based and scholarly research, the chapter will point to identity projects, leadership styles,

and approaches to planning and communication that appear most effective for guiding major change as well as for managing an IWP in general. Readers may find that at any given time only one or two of the sections may be pertinent to their particular situation. On the whole, however, each section will I hope alert readers as to how such issues as identity and leadership style can work for or against you as you strive to effect change. A lesser but nonetheless important aim of this chapter is to defamiliarize IWPs such that we can see them anew as alien entities in an academic bureaucracy and explore whether that status is an advantage, a disadvantage, or simply inescapable—if indeed writing programs are fundamentally about writing instruction, as some insist. Finally, I should note that this chapter does not intend to address all aspects of planning for change but instead will focus on key factors such as identity, stakeholders, leadership styles and approaches to planning.

WHO ARE WE? IDENTITY AS A SOCIAL FACT

Planning to create or change an IWP often drives attention to practical matters such as budgets, space, staff and, most seductive, curriculum. But the most successful approach, according to a growing number of scholars in the field of change management, will view institutional change mainly as an identity project, a concept of growing interest in the field of Writing Studies (Haswell & MacLeod, 1997; Hesse, 2008; Malenczyk, 2002; McGee & Handa, 2005; Rhodes, 2000). The goal of an identity project is to create a durable, recognizable identity that propels the organization toward becoming a social fact (Kraatz & Block 2008). An excellent example of this is Royer and Schendel's observation that new faculty at Grand Valley State University "may take our existence for granted," adding that they themselves view the rise of IWPs as "structural necessities" (this volume). Similarly, describing the current status of the Knight Institute at Cornell, Hjortshaj notes, "For me and for my colleagues, I can say that our programs and positions have been institutionally disconnected from the English Department for so long that independence from that field no longer means very much to us, if anything. For me, particularly, it means no more than the necessity of our independence from *any* department or discipline" (this volume).

An important first step in creating an IWP aiming for the status of "social fact" is to begin with a meticulous inventory of the IWP's current or anticipated identities. The successful plan begins by building a thoughtful, well-researched answer to the question, "Who are we?" (Gioia & Thomas, 1996; Jepperson & Meyer, 1991; MacDonald, 2013; Pratt & Foreman, 2000). Wherever possible, this answer should be based on the actual rather than aspirational activities and

qualities of the program, not on the hypotheses or desires of the program's planners and stakeholders. In situations where no organized writing instruction or support is being offered, the identity question will need to begin with "what informal means of writing instruction do we offer; what do we mean by 'writing instruction'?" In cases where some organized form of writing instruction is already part of the culture, the identity project can begin with an assessment of what is already in place. A good example of this is provided by Filling-Brown and Frechie, who observe that

once we scratched the surface, we discovered that among our veteran faculty there were large disagreements about what our core writing curriculum had been designed to accomplish, what elements of it were allied with specific general education goals, and what level of proficiency our students were supposed to achieve. Arguably the most productive aspect of the reform process was the establishment of an agreed upon set of student learning outcomes that were both explicitly related to the College Cabrini mission and formulated upon a contemporary appreciation for the role of writing instruction at the college and university level. For the first time really, our faculty were developing a thoughtful methodology for outcomes assessment which, in our case, was a sister project to the development of outcomes for the new core. (this volume)

To construct this identity, stakeholders must take into account their values, beliefs, and attitudes about the organization; its activities and goals; and proposed changes to any of these. After creating this comprehensive list, the next step is to identify points of convergence that link diverse participants' understandings of the organization. Creating a visual representation, such as a chart or table that lists and links shared ground, can be a valuable exercise in planning sessions and serve thereafter as a useful reminder and baseline for further planning and assessment.

It's important to consider how great a challenge this identity project can be for writing programs. Nearly everyone on a college campus might reasonably be considered a stakeholder of writing. However, few if any stakeholders beyond the writing program administrator (WPA) and faculty have training in the field of writing. Most stakeholders are going to be unaware of the scholarship, the best practices and debates, in the field and, for that matter, are not likely to be aware that Writing Studies is even a field. One of many enlightening encounters in the early years of our program's formation was with a dean who was amused to learn that Composition and Rhetoric was a field, and

Ph.D.-granting at that. Compounding this lack of awareness of Writing Studies is that most stakeholders will claim personal expertise and exhibit some degree of emotional investment in how writing should be taught. Finally, if an English department has been the home of writing instruction for many years, stakeholders—including those from English departments—will generally have considerable difficulty discerning the difference between English and Writing Studies (for discussions of this divide, see for example, Johnson as well as Lalicker in this volume). With such an array of stakeholders and beliefs, values, investments, and attitudes toward writing instruction, finding common ground can be daunting. For example, Kearns and Turner in this volume describe how they first needed to find common ground—an interest in textual analysis—among their own faculty, who were mainly Ph.D.s and MAs from English departments at a time when the literary canon was being rejected and many approaches to Literary Studies were under intense critique.

The second major task of an identity project is to identify and produce a sense of continuity between the old and the new (Pratt & Foreman, 2000; Van Knippenberg, 2006; Ulrich, 2007). The “old” is stakeholders’ current understanding of the writing program, and the “new” is the projected identity of the organization. Continuity between old and new may boil down to a few chestnuts, such as that student writing needs to be improved and the writing program is the venue for making that happen. IWPs should do their best to find lines of continuity that are palatable to them; however, they should be careful not to use this identity-building time to critique the dearly held beliefs of their stakeholders about writing. As Pratt and Foreman caution, “Revolutionary rhetoric produces counter-revolutionary response” (2000, p. 33). Steer clear of discussions that suggest a radical break with stakeholders in terms of the program’s identity, philosophy, or practices. Emphasize continuity, keeping in mind that your first goal must be to find common ground and, when it comes to the early stages of forming a writing program, there are often pretty slim pickings. Continuity will strengthen stakeholders’ ties to your project, and that will pave the way for your IWP to become a social fact. The more you can identify and synthesize diverse and even conflicting views, the better: “Changes are more accepted when framed in a way that allows people to conserve their own sense of personal and organizational identity” (Kraatz & Block, 2008, p. 252).

An identity project is a time-consuming and ongoing affair, particularly in larger institutions with multiple stakeholders. However, be assured that even in instances where an identity statement must be produced under time constraints and with less than the optimal number of stakeholders involved, its creation has been shown to improve the chances of success in effecting organizational change (Hatch & Schultz, 2004).

THE PLURALIST IDENTITY OF WRITING PROGRAMS

For an IWP to attain and maintain the status of a social fact, its stakeholders must avoid the trap of imagining its identity as stable and homogenous. IWPs operate within multiple institutional spheres. As such, they engage many different values and beliefs about writing and many different cultures of writing (see for example Hanganu-Bresch's discussion of curriculum debates in IWPs in this volume). All disciplines and even subdisciplines are in many respects worlds unto themselves in terms of approaches and attitudes toward writing, from instruction to aesthetics. While all use writing as a means of producing, legitimizing, and disseminating knowledge, each has its own epistemology and institutional logic, and these must be understood and negotiated. Thus an IWP bears multiple institutional identities accorded it by its various stakeholders, each of whom brings to it a different understanding and set of expectations. This complex identity poses a major problem for an IWP, for the "need to placate diverse external constituent groups is a minimum requirement for bare survival" of a pluralist organization. A gloomy prospect, to be sure, but there is a bright side: If properly identified and managed, the same expectations that trigger conflict, division, and fragility of identity can also serve to cohere and strengthen identity (Kraatz & Block, 2008, p. 245).

Multiple identities occur when stakeholders have different notions of what is fundamental, distinct, and enduring about the organization. For example, some members of an English Department may view a writing program as a way to provide jobs and teaching experience for its graduate students. The administration may look to the writing program as a valuable source of metrics on teaching and learning outcomes or perhaps a source of institutional credit/tuition stream. Undergraduates may see the writing program as a burdensome, unnecessary requirement or as key to their academic success. Faculty outside the IWP may see it as a vehicle for teaching students grammar and mechanics. Advisors may see it as the means of introducing freshmen to campus resources and identifying at-risk students, while student support services are likely to view the IWP as a partner in working with at-risk students. Adjunct faculty might view the IWP as a source of professional identity and employment, or as an exploiter of their labor. In turn, the IWP will have a professional identity situated in the field of Writing Studies itself. High school teachers, parents, deans, the transfer credit office, the office of student conduct, the international student office, psychological and career counseling services, student groups, community service organizations, graduate and professional schools at the university, employers: each likely has a different notion of what is fundamental, distinct, and enduring about the IWP and will thus approach it with significantly different needs

and expectations. Finally, though not exhaustively, one's own administrative and instructional staff often hold competing ideas of what an IWP is or should be.

Identity is not confined to the roles that an organization plays or the views of its stakeholders. It is also a product of the organization's use values. Writing programs are typically distinct in offering courses that reach nearly every undergraduate student, from local to international, prepared to underprepared, and with a range of disabilities or other issues that affect writing instruction. Writing programs often introduce students to college resources, acculturate them to college life, provide social engagement and community, acquaint them with research methods and documentation, advise them of the university's code of integrity, expose them to new majors and topics of inquiry, gather metrics and track outcomes for accreditation, partner with other student support services to provide a safety net for students dealing with academic, psychological, or medical issues. In addition, the writing program may be consulting with faculty on integrating, teaching, or assessing writing; running writing workshops and other writing-related activities for undergraduates, graduates, faculty, and staff, local schools and community organizations, and in many cases also running the Writing Center, providing individual support and feedback to students. Creating and periodically reviewing and revising an account of the organization's stakeholders, roles, perceptions, and use values provides an aerial shot of the IWP's identity, the diversity and extent of its reach and constituents, its many identities and functions. These are easy to overlook precisely because we are so busy trying to meet so many needs while also working to advance what we see as our program's identity and value.

MANAGING CHANGE/MANAGING PLURALIST IDENTITIES

Managing more than one identity can result in conflict, overload, paralysis, and vacillation, leading to a kind of identity fatigue, with the IWP devoting too much energy and resources negotiating competing expectations. Such identity fatigue can interfere with the ability to make meaningful plans and decisions, both short and long term: How much effort should we put into working with international students? Should we teach grammar and mechanics? What is the best way to train new instructors? Does our curriculum reflect best practices in the field? Should we be focusing on campus space or on better salaries or class sizes? The list is endless.

Well-managed multiple identities and functions can generate a more flexible and adaptive organization that can respond effectively to many different demands and situations, however overwhelming they are to confront. Multiple identities also broaden one's base of constituents, which is good for program

acceptance and longevity, and for appealing to external shareholders such as donors.

Once an IWP has identified its roles, functions, and stakeholders, the next step is to evaluate each of these to determine which to add, grow, decrease, eliminate, or maintain (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). In some instances, you may be able to converge identities that have significant overlap; in other cases, you may choose to differentiate identities that pose the potential for conflict across roles and functions. Evaluation of your identities should take into account such questions as:

- Would the proposed change affect the support of a powerful stakeholder?
- Does or will this identity or function have low legitimacy or support?
- Does or will this identity or function have future strategic value?
- How does, or will, this identity affect the available level of resources?
- Are other identities supported by or dependent upon this identity?

Another important consideration is the symbolic value of the identity. For example, a writing program may have historically offered a workshop for English graduate students on writing job letters that was not popular with the graduate students nor particularly appreciated by the department faculty—and thus a waste of time and a creator of ill-will. The logical move in such an instance is to eliminate the workshop. However, doing so may carry significant symbolic value that will redound negatively on the IWP. Here, a careful assessment of what the entity means to all stakeholders, along with a collaborative communication strategy (to be discussed at the end of the chapter) will be critical to deciding how to manage this counterproductive relationship.

Identities that have powerful stakeholders and sufficient resources should not be eliminated, even if there are logical reasons to do so. Similarly, the IWP should avoid eliminating an identity where there is significant interdependence and compatibility between it and other roles and functions in the organization, or when it is responsive to multiple stakeholders and poses relatively low costs of coordination—for example, a Writing Center. On the other hand, if an identity has scarce resources and support, or when there is little interdependence or compatibility between it and others in the IWP, it is probably best to divest. Whether creating a new IWP or looking to change an existing one, be aware that the addition of identities will attract supporters and loyalty, and elimination of an identity will be sure to alienate and directly affect some stakeholders. Elimination is going to trigger battles over resources and generate ideological as well as identity conflicts. This is in fact what occurs when English or other departments lose their identities as sites of writing instruction. Thus when eliminating an identity

it is extraordinarily important to engage in a meticulously orchestrated identity project and to do as much as possible to include the affected stakeholders in both the identity-building and communication processes.

Sometimes it is wiser to subordinate than to eliminate an identity. Subordination, or “nurturing the unchosen,” occurs when an identity doesn’t fit neatly into the scheme but has powerful stakeholders (Albert & Whetten, 1985). In such instances, one does not prominently feature that identity but continues to give the staff who engage in it the resources and recognition they need to be effective and enthusiastic about their work. For example, an IWP may inherit a grammar/proofreading workshop for university staff that promotes an identity and function that the IWP would rather shed but that is valued by key stakeholders. The IWP might in this instance make sure that the workshop leaders are given sufficient support and appreciation but are not prominently featured as one of the IWP’s identities. Such subordination is a minefield, however, for subordinated organizations often feel unwelcome or inferior, even if they are not deprived of resources or neglected. If any identity appears to trigger political infighting, it must be immediately and carefully evaluated to determine the best action to take. One could argue, for example, that a failure on the part of English departments to recognize writing instruction as a key identity—one that was important to nurture, if not foreground—motivated the creation of IWPs.

BUREAUCRACIES, EMULATION AND IDENTITY

Emulation is central to the construction of identity, whether of an individual or an organization, yet its role often goes unrecognized. Bureaucratic organizations, such as universities, generally gravitate toward change that helps them more closely resemble organizations they wish to emulate. In turn, change that interferes with this drive toward resemblance can be perceived as a threat. This is one of the reasons an IWP can set off an antagonistic response, both in exiting a department (thereby threatening that department’s effort to resemble its emulation targets) but also in being a new type of organization, thus interfering with the institution’s drive to resemble other institutions. The drive to emulate is modestly aspirational, aimed toward other organizations that are regarded as slightly more prestigious than one’s own, for too great a prestige gap between the aspiring institution and its model is also likely to be perceived as threatening to an organization’s identity (LaBianca, 2001). Most academic institutions and departments have an explicit or tacit list of institutions (or programs) they seek to resemble. Being aware of this drive to resemblance, as well as which institutions are models and why, are invaluable to the IWP identity project. A shared emulation target can provide common ground for IWP stakeholders. Megan O’Neil

exemplifies the use of emulation models in her explanation of how Stetson developed their writing program as she points to “the majority of small colleges and universities Stetson considers ‘peer or aspirational institutions’ [that] have a writing requirement consisting of multiple pieces. For instance, among dozens of others, Swarthmore College, Moravian College, Elon University, Carleton College, Middlebury College, and Furman University require a combination of FSEM-like courses and WI-like courses” (2014, para. 5).

Identifying other higher education institutions as models is significantly easier than finding program-level models of emulation for individual IWPs. For one thing, there aren’t many IWPs from which to choose. The most recent surveys of independent writing programs suggest that there are only about 60 in the nation, the oldest being Harvard’s Expository Program. From an institutional standpoint, most IWPs are relatively new, founded in the 1970s or later. The small numbers, the relative novelty, and the differences from one to the next in terms of structure, staffing, mission, curriculum, students, and types of institutions make it difficult to identify emulation models. To complicate matters, a target IWP may be located in an institution that itself might not be accepted as a model for one’s institution. Insensitivity to the choice of emulation models can interfere with the success of a change initiative. “If what is being proposed or those proposing it are portrayed as superior to the status quo, the inner circle is unlikely to accept it, for to do so would be to acknowledge their inferiority, since they are the status quo,” observes Rebecca Moore Howard (1993, p. 38). “Those in the outer circle who wish to change an institution have a much higher probability of success if what they propose is depicted as an enhancement of the status quo and if those who propose it depict themselves as the equal rather than the superior or inferior of those to whom they propose it” (Howard, 1993, p. 38).

The division between utilitarian versus values-based orientation is also bound up with emulation issues and thus can prompt identity threats. Along these lines, Lalicker observes that the “redefinition of the Department of English from a home for writing and linguistics, to a center of literary study with a sideline in literacy gatekeeping, bifurcates literature’s supposed humanism from composition’s supposed economic practicality” (this volume). The more a particular activity or program is affiliated with applied knowledge and practical uses, the less valued it tends to be in a university culture that strives to align its identity with the life of the mind. Thus for example Cary Nelson, in his discussion of the conditions under which graduate students are compelled to teach writing, compares writing instruction to “community college grounds-keeping or high school lunch room monitoring,” adding that “it’s not immediately clear what more our students could do to prepare themselves for the service jobs of the future” (2002, pp. 199–200). Nelson’s comparisons underscore the kind of subtle work the

emulation model does in a university. Positioning writing instruction as manual rather than intellectual labor, he frames writing instruction as the stuff of an inferior “outsider” (indeed, a groundskeeper) and a threat to the institutional identity of those who perform it.

Writing programs typically emphasize or signify teaching and skills, both of which fall on the utilitarian side of the continuum (see, for example, Strickland, 2011). The trend in recent years has been for writing programs to emulate other disciplines than attempt to rehabilitate and revamp an identity based on writing instruction. Meanwhile, most stakeholders continue to value writing programs precisely because they are viewed as teaching-centered and skill-building. This gap poses a considerable identity challenge to writing programs, the implications of which generally seem to be going unremarked.

LEADERSHIP IDENTITY AND STYLE IN A BUREAUCRACY

Organizations are not the only ones with pluralist identities. The identity of an individual WPA can also be pluralist and as wide-ranging as that of the program itself. The entrepreneurial-style director, as I will discuss below, is likely to have a number of identities: department chair, mentor, teacher, scholar, staff, change agent, publicity manager, assessment expert, counselor/advisor, transfer credit officer, supervisor, colleague, and the sole or lead developer of the writing curriculum, as well as perhaps heading the Writing Center along with the multiple identities and functions that characterize that organization in its own right (Enos & Borrowman, 2008; George, 1999; McLeod & Soven, 1992). More modest and yet similarly plural and conflicting identities are likely to characterize the faculty of an IWP, who may primarily identify with a field other than writing, and with a career other than being a professor of writing, yet are viewed almost exclusively by other members of the institution, from students to faculty, as writing instructors. These identity issues grow even more complex for programs that rely primarily on graduate students as their instructional staffs who are required to teach for the program as part of their funding arrangements. In many cases, such students have little or no identification with the profession of writing and may even derogate or altogether reject such an identity.

Identity projects and communication strategies require leadership, particularly when significant change is the goal. Leadership is defined by Kouzes & Posner as “the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations” (2010, p. 30). As this should suggest, the leadership demands upon someone founding an IWP are considerably different from those required of a GenAdmin stepping into a well-defined position in a well-established program, unless the GenAdmin has been hired to lead a major change. Initiating a major

change “requires the aggressive cooperation of many individuals” (Kotter, 1995, p. 60). It’s important to linger on these notions of “mobilizing others” and “aggressive cooperation” to distinguish them from the conventional academic activities of decision-making committees. It is one thing to get a committee to vote on an idea or project, and another to make it happen. A committee can approve the creation of a Writing Center, for example, but making the Writing Center work—recruiting and training people who will actually implement its philosophy, convincing stakeholders to recommend it and getting students to use it—are substantial activities quite apart from a committee vote. The creation of an organization or the implementation of a major change requires real leadership—the actual mobilization and aggressive cooperation of other people—that is not demanded of administrators in established organizations who are managing day-to-day operations. Without the ability to motivate people, to get them to commit not only intellectually but actively to bringing something into being, one’s communication strategies, plans, and votes will lead to nothing. This is particularly true in bureaucratic cultures where, as Kraatz and Block note, success at effecting change at the organizational level is “rare and difficult” (2008, p. 255).

“Leadership” is rather a freighted issue in academic culture, for academic programs and departments do not require “leaders” as defined. We have administrators whose style is appropriately bureaucratic and institutional. The *institutional style* is effective for organizations with well-defined structures, a clearly established hierarchy, and a predictable, controlled set of operations and functions such as describe colleges and universities. As bureaucracies, institutions of higher education are designed to ensure equity, impartiality, accountability, and legality; they are structured to foster and protect expertise and guard against corruption. A bureaucracy admits to a fixed set of actions, policies, procedures, and processes. Its job is to authorize and protect the autonomy of its members. The ability to be mobilized, motivated, persuaded to change due to the leadership style of an individual is at cross-purposes with a bureaucracy, which by design is meant to protect members against charismatic leadership or individual interventions. The responsibilities of a department chair, for example, are well-defined and seldom include having to aggressively mobilize the department in order to get them to do new activities or change their identities, roles, or values. The chair’s job is to ensure that the policies, procedures, and systems that are in place are being done in a timely fashion and administered appropriately. That is not to say that a department chair may not find herself leading a major change initiative but the extent to which that occurs suggests the degree to which disciplines, as well as colleges and universities as a whole, are shedding their bureaucratic structure and thus, perhaps, their authority and autonomy along with it.

Creating new organizations, leading successful change, requires an entrepreneurial style that is alien and threatening to a bureaucracy. Thus one sees, for example, Mark Bousquet's hardly atypical suspicion of "managerial insiders" whose "general train of thinking in rhetoric and composition scholarship emphasize[s] how to 'make arguments' that will be 'convincing' to those 'with the power' inside the institution" (2002, p. 494). Bousquet is not wrong to fear corporatization—encroachment from the outside, an assault on academic freedom and autonomy—but his own effort to unionize is a similar sort of encroachment, an assault on the apprenticeship model of the academic bureaucracy, an alliance with an outside organization, and a concerted effort to mobilize the cooperation of individuals to change the institution of higher education. This entrepreneurial style, as opposed to the institutional style, is aggressive, adaptive, flexible, innovative, and responsive. It focuses on meeting the needs of constituents—from students to deans to outside funders and perhaps legislators, as well; it identifies new opportunities, seeks cost effectiveness and efficiency, and motivates people to change. The entrepreneurial style will whenever possible ignore hierarchy and seek to distribute responsibility to those able to do a job well, rather than those with the most impressive credentials. Entrepreneurial leadership is fluid and collaborative, context- and goal-driven rather than rule- and committee-bound. It places high value on responsiveness and adaptability to stakeholders. All of these things are anathema to a bureaucracy, which values hierarchy and views accommodation, flexibility, and responsiveness as threats to its autonomy and expertise—and isn't wrong to do so.

THE FOUNDING IWP AS ENTREPRENEUR

Entrepreneurs are "uniquely skilled at sensing emerging opportunities or the potential of nascent technologies and through perseverance and determination build successful new enterprises" (Mayo & Nohria, 2005, p. 5; see also Dover & Dierk, 2010). This describes well all of the founding directors of IWPs whom I interviewed. Each pointed to a transformative stage, a trigger moment, in which they realized that they needed to abandon or considerably retool the institutional model of the department chair they were attempting to emulate, and instead devote their energy to identifying and cultivating relationships with stakeholders across and beyond campus. They all seemed not only to be good at but truly enjoy identifying new opportunities to innovate or partner with others, to experiment with new technologies or other means of enhancing their programs. A wonderful example of this is provided by Rhoades et al. (this volume) who, without a budget, ingeniously found a way to provide instructors with resources.

Rhoades developed strong relationships with publishers who sent in top-notch people in the field to provide workshops to her faculty.

My interviews with founding WPAs suggested that they were also notably good at distributing management. While they sought out opportunities to collaborate with faculty, they distinguished themselves from others in terms of their workplace egalitarianism. Their focus was not on credentials or position in the academic hierarchy but rather on finding and mentoring the right person for a given responsibility, which could be staff, graduate students, and even undergraduates who had needed skills, knowledge, and a willingness to contribute. To some extent, these directors made a virtue of necessity, given the budgetary and personnel constraints they faced. However, most seemed to go out of their way to extend beyond the customary borders of a department or program. For example, rather than confining their faculty hires to individuals with backgrounds in English or Composition/Rhetoric, they recruited people from business or engineering and found use of their skills and experiences for developing other aspects of their IWPs. Their instructional staffs tended to include what, for a conventional English or Composition/Rhetoric program, would be “outsiders,” threats to the autonomy and expertise of the bureaucratic structure: lawyers, engineers, scientists, journalists, health professionals, business executives who lacked English or Composition/Rhetoric credentials (see for example Thaiss et al. in this volume describe how their program at UC Davis evolved from a conventional composition/rhetoric staff to one that prized “versatile colleagues,” including lecturers from law, engineering, and the sciences who were able to address the needs of stakeholders).

Some of the directors I interviewed were themselves “outsiders”—pointing to an entrepreneurial leaning on the part of those who hired them—with degrees in fields other than English or Composition/Rhetoric. Few began as tenure-track or tenured, though some went on to acquire tenure in the programs they founded or at another institution thereafter.

In contrast, the GenAdmins had expected credentials (Ph.D.s in English or Composition/Rhetoric), hired as faculty and serving, like any other professor, as the chair or director of the program. They were tenure-track or tenured by an English department and concerned with shared governance, committee staffing and decisions, and customary processes such as course rostering. Unlike the founding WPAs, the GenAdmins did not see their role as one of distributed leadership; they did not see themselves as expected to drive and implement innovation in their programs. Unlike the founding directors, they did not point to mentorship of staff or the need to identify and be responsive to stakeholders across the university. This is not to suggest that these GenAdmins were unresponsive or indifferent to such things but rather to underscore that the Gen-

Admins were functioning as department chairs, rather than founding directors. Systems, procedures, policies, identities, functions were already in place. Their responsibility was to ensure that their departments or programs ran smoothly and collegially. They viewed their job as a limited service appointment. Their driving vision was akin to that of most tenure-track or tenured faculty: They described their main goal as contributing to the field of Writing Studies, and looked forward to returning to their own research and teaching at the end of their service commitment.

Founding WPAs, on the other hand, even 10 or more years into the creation of their programs, were still putting considerable energy into identifying opportunities for collaboration and service to students, faculty, and the university, to innovating and exploring different approaches to teaching writing as well as to training writing instructors and tutors, to finding funding, classrooms, space, to developing and maintaining relationships within and beyond the university, to keeping up with and, time permitting, to publishing in the field, with a commitment to this latter perhaps providing the widest range of responses, from some who wished they could find the time but didn't consider it a pressing task, to those who regularly engage in research and publishing. The task of the GenAdmins was substantially more conventionally scholarly in orientation, well captured by Charlton et al., who describe it as "taking earlier work in new directions, particularly on such intertwined issues as disciplinarity and identity; power, authority and positioning; and the place of rhetoric and ethics in writing program administration" (2011, p. 7).

BEST LEADERSHIP STYLE FOR OVERSEEING CHANGE

Leadership style, as this suggests, depends on such things as the development stage of the IWP and what, if any, major changes its director is charged with implementing. Someone tasked with founding or effecting a major change to an organization will need an entrepreneurial style but will have to be aware of how foreign and therefore threatening that style will be to most members of an academic culture. In contrast, once the IWP is established, particularly if its intention is to emulate a conventional discipline such as English, the institutional style will probably be more effective for fitting into the culture and managing the kinds of responsibilities and processes that have already been put into place. The institutional leader must be adept at shepherding "dispersed leadership," addressing the routine problems of a department along with, ideally, finding ways to "provoke questions and engage colleagues in solving the operational and strategic problems that confront a department" (Bowen, 2002, p. 158). An established IWP, like any academic department, will likely choose to focus

on *optimization*—maintaining, refining, improving their processes and policies, focusing on stability and viability—rather than on *exploration*, the responsive, experimental, innovative, opportunity-seeking behavior demanded of those responsible for leading major change initiatives or founding new organizations. For example, in his advice to department chairs, Robinson explicitly cautions against any attempt to be a “transformational leader” (1996, p. 4).

However, even an entrepreneurial director must confront the tension between the competing requirements of exploring versus optimizing (Levinthal & March, 1993; Turner, Swart & Maylor, 2013). Ebben and Johnson (2005) have observed that efforts to merge the two are unsuccessful. Organizations that devote themselves either to innovation or to efficiently running the current organization seem to fare better than those that attempt organizational ambidexterity. Along these lines, it was fascinating to observe how steadfastly innovative were the founding directors I interviewed, even those whose programs were well-established and successful. This suggests that either the organization or the director (or both) had been shaped by a drive to explore and innovate. One of the questions that arose from this is whether some writing programs needed to remain entrepreneurial or whether the movement from entrepreneurial to institutional was inevitable.

Despite my emphasis on the need for an entrepreneurial style for founding of IWPs, it is also important to underscore that this style is challenging to members of bureaucracies. The founding IWP director needs to be savvy about academic culture and able to switch as needed between institutional and entrepreneurial style to the extent possible, for the entrepreneurial style is sufficiently threatening to jeopardize a director’s credibility and therefore success. The simple and fundamentally entrepreneurial strategy of cultivating deans and provosts as allies, for example, may be viewed with alarm and suspicion by faculty who see any administrative involvement or managerial authority and activity as threats to academic freedom and authority.

One strategy for shielding the IWP and diminishing the threat of his or her autonomy and authority is to create a committee-based advisory or reporting structure. A committee comprised of tenured faculty from across the disciplines can take on the sorts of decision-making processes (for example, decisions about hiring and renewal of writing instructors) that otherwise put the director in a vulnerable position and do not interfere with the kinds of entrepreneurial activities that are necessary for leading a change initiative. Such a structure can contribute to the identity project, allowing regular contact with key stakeholders, involving them in decision-making processes, and countering the concerns of individual autonomy in a bureaucratic institution. However, this strategic, adaptive emulation introduces one problem as it illuminates another. A com-

mittee made up of faculty from across the disciplines will lack the disciplinary expertise and investment that the customary discipline-based committee has and that, by its nature, helps to safeguard the authority and autonomy of its shared discipline. The interdisciplinary committee, in contrast, compels the IWP director to engage in the complex act of educating the committee about Writing Studies while asking them to make decisions based on an understanding of the field. However challenging, having a committee that is invested in the program, identifies with Writing Studies, and contributes to the goals and visions of the organization is invaluable to the IWP and the institution as a whole.

CONCEPTUALIZING CHANGE: PLANNED VERSUS EMERGENT APPROACHES

One last piece of managing change is the approach to planning itself. Research on managing change points to two basic approaches: planned and emergent (Van der Voet, Groeneveld & Kuipers, 2013). The *planned approach* assumes that one begins with a stable entity that will be transformed from an unsatisfactory to a satisfactory state by designing and implementing a set of objectives. The plan then involves creating a timeline for achieving those objectives. Thus for example one would conceptualize the creation of an IWP being separated from an English department as a series of steps that would lead the IWP from an unsatisfactory to a satisfactory state; or one would similarly envision as a set of steps the conversion of an instructional staff from adjunct to full-time. The planned approach, in other words, conceptualizes change as a linear process that chronologically unfolds.

In contrast, the *emergent approach* conceives of organizations not as stable but rather as in continual flux, always adapting to an ever-changing environment. Where the planned approach conceives of one large, long-term goal, the emergent approach sees change as a series of small, continuous adjustments in the direction of a desired identity, and a set of objectives that are also being adjusted in response to changing conditions. The emergent approach might begin with the same objective as a planned approach—for example, to convert from an adjunct to a full-time faculty—but instead of a timeline with a series of staged steps, will approach the situation with the idea of converting as many instructors as possible each year until the staff has been fully converted. The planned approach is relatively inflexible—but dependable—while the emergent approach allows the organization to respond to other opportunities or conditions that might take precedence over the initial long-term objective.

We usually have the planned approach in mind when we think about major changes, but the emergent approach is more attuned to the entrepreneurial chal-

lenges of creating an IWP or effecting other large changes. Both approaches begin with a plan, a sense of direction and a desired outcome. However, the emergent approach builds into its plan—and thus also into its thinking and its communications with all stakeholders in planning—the understanding that objectives and desired outcomes are likely to change over time, in response to changing conditions and unanticipated consequences.

The planned approach is ill equipped to respond to the kinds of changes that are part and parcel of newly forming or transforming organizations. In institutional cultures, decision-making is often a drawn-out process, and annual budgets are mostly inflexible. For example, some years ago our writing program developed a three-year planned approach to convert our instructional staff from mainly part-time adjuncts and graduate students to full-time lectureships. During that same time, we also did some emergent-approach planning for what we thought would be a modest change, replacing proficiency tests and other processes with directed-self-placement, allowing our students to place themselves into the course they thought most appropriate to their needs. We expected this small change to benefit students as well as eliminate a significant amount of administrative work—not to mention remove one distracting identity from our decidedly pluralist collection. Neither our discussions nor our research into directed-self-placement prepared us for the 800% increase in the number of students who, in the first year of implementation, chose to enroll in the small, intensive seminars designed for those who find writing especially challenging. We were fortunate to have set up a sufficiently flexible administrative and instructional staff, and a fungible budget, so that we could divert funds from one line to another and make a host of changes to our course roster, instructional, and tutoring staffs. We were also lucky that our dean was committed to the two initiatives, and open to emergent planning. He encouraged us to meet the student demand for the intensive courses. As this suggests, the emergent approach requires, among other things, a partially fungible budget, an adaptive administrative and instructional staff, and stakeholders, particularly deans or provosts, who are prepared for emergent planning and are themselves sufficiently entrepreneurial in leadership style.

Of course, most seasoned administrators expect that change is likely to produce some unpredictable outcomes no matter what approach to planning one chooses. In fact, the small changes over time that are characteristic of the emergent model will eventually resemble the stages of a planned approach despite the lack of a formal schedule. In some cases, the planned approach may be preferable if there are concerns about the institution's commitment to the intended change or the possibility of a change in administration that could affect funding. What is important is to do your best to conceptualize change and the conditions under

which it will occur, and create conditions that allow you to adapt to whatever opportunities or problems arise. Use your identity project and communication strategies to involve and prepare key stakeholders. Don't overlook the people who have a hand in your budget, not only the deans and provosts, but the business administrators, human resources department, and development.

For those who are asked to implement changes and have limited budgets and staff, the emergent approach may be the only option, in which case develop a general direction and vision in collaboration with stakeholders and alert them that there will likely be continued adjustments along the way. That preparation prevents administration from being surprised or chagrined by requests for funding or other more substantial changes down the road. The emergent approach, along with being more responsive to the current conditions facing the organization, also allows the WPA to take into account current research or early warning signs that suggest the wisdom of a change in plans.

However, for those who anticipate large-scale change, such as the creation of an IWP or the implementation of an ambitious writing initiative, a combination of the two approaches is ideal. As a former management consultant, I quickly learned that the organizations that planned nearly always outstripped those that reacted. Developing a one-, three-, five-, and ten-year plan in collaboration with stakeholders and decision-makers—with the understanding that the plan will need to be adjusted annually or whenever there is a significant, unexpected change in conditions—compels everyone to understand, invest in, and account for all aspects of the organization. Planning will help to ensure a budget sufficient to run the program and point to further investments likely down the road; it will organize and refresh the identity project. The combination of emergent and planned approaches, in turn, alerts everyone to the necessity of adapting to current conditions. You are not creating or changing a department that looks like every other department on campus; you are helping to build the entity that others, our successors, will one day emulate or perhaps simply step into, a turnkey operation.

COMMUNICATING CHANGE

To recall the opening of this chapter, change is produced through communication. Everything explored in this chapter is an important, and too often overlooked, component of the content and act of communicating change. One of the biggest mistakes made in communication is to assume that the job is to “get the word out” and leave it at that. Instead, an organization should view every identity, every interaction, every plan as a form of communication that should be tied to the goals and visions of the IWP. If, for example, the administration

and staff meet to discuss a problem, the solutions they propose should be measured against how these fit into the IWP's identity and long-term goals. Faculty and staff meetings should routinely discuss whether their plans and actions are fitting into the larger picture. Annual planning meetings should be held that review the year's activities and accomplishments and consider how these will affect the long-range plan. This will help to ensure that the IWP's identity, goals, and vision remain current and aligned, with broad stakeholder buy-in.

The main goal of communication is to create a coherent message that fits the values not only of the IWP, but of the institution as a whole. As I hope to have demonstrated, the IWP is a pluralist—and novel—organization that poses serious challenges to coherent messaging. Communication strategies need to be shaped by an understanding of the organization and the issues it faces across the institution if messaging is to be consistent across its plurality of identities, diverse range of stakeholders, and great range of messengers and media.

Whenever possible, all messages about change should be collaboratively authored by representative stakeholders and individually addressed to each stakeholder who will be affected. Thus for example if an IWP is to be created in part by separation from an English department, the ideal communication approach will be to work with a group of English department faculty to co-author a message to other individual English faculty; it will in turn work with a group of graduate students to co-author a message to other individual English graduate students, and so on. Of course this is easier said than done if the decision to create the IWP was top-down and contested by the English department, but the IWP staff should do its best to forge ahead and pursue this collaboration with an open mind (and very thick skin), for it will be a great aid in managing the nature and direction of what can otherwise be a very spikey relationship for years to come. If, however, all members of the department resist collaboration, the IWP should not lose heart. The strongest communication strategy for an IWP is to generate messages that are co-authored by members of other key disciplines or disciplinary clusters at your institution. Most likely at least some of these stakeholders had a hand in generating the creation of your organization and are invested in its success. Communication co-authorship across the disciplines is mutually instructive and beneficial, converting other disciplines into communication partners and involving them in the vision and objectives and how these will be achieved.

Along with coherent messaging, an IWP needs strong messengers. Identifying and cultivating communication leaders—role models who can portray and champion the IWP's goals and vision—will play a major role in how quickly the IWP becomes a social fact of one's institution. Nearly every WPA I interviewed pointed to the importance of having their dean or provost function as a com-

munication leader. Most effective were instances where the dean or provost was receptive to learning about the field and reading research from the field of Writing Studies. For example, one WPA regularly shared articles and other research with his dean, which they discussed. This, in turn, helped the dean to be an effective communication leader and to contribute meaningfully to the goals and tasks of the writing program. A successful IWP communication strategy must include an ongoing effort to educate stakeholders about current findings (e.g., Rhodes, 2000). It must also be sensitive to maintaining continuity between the old and the new—no easy feat, philosophically, for most IWPs, since the “old,” for us, typically means hanging onto an identity that foregrounds teaching grammar and mechanics. This image of writing instruction is so ingrained in the perceptions of stakeholders—indeed, may have been instrumental in the very creation of the IWP—that WPAs cannot afford to ignore or dismiss it in their communication strategies. To do so may jeopardize their support. IWP communication must be seen as a very long-term responsibility that requires an unusual—for an academic organization—level of attention to stakeholders and considerable forbearance. If successful, however, the IWP will develop effective communication leaders who help to facilitate productive interpretations of the goals and responsibilities of their organization.

Communication leaders should not be limited to deans and provosts. IWPs should creatively identify leaders across the institution, including faculty members from the various disciplines, the program’s own staff and faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, development staff, computing services, and the finance office. Advisors and student support services, as well as teaching and learning centers for faculty can also be important sites for cultivating communication champions. It’s probably wise to think of every individual an IWP encounters as a potential communication leader. The more, the merrier.

One of the questions raised in the course of this modest study was what kind of “social fact” should a writing program strive to become, to plan for, to lead? Embedded in a bureaucracy, should the IWP try as much as possible to resemble other established organizations? Certainly this appears to be a model for many writing programs as they strive to emulate the structure and approach of English departments—no surprise, since most WPAs come from programs housed by English and shaped by their organizational styles, values, and interests, including the debates about content, the drive to create majors and minors, even the not altogether subtle devaluing of first year writing courses consigned to graduate students and adjuncts so that tenured faculty can pursue research and graduate teaching. Some programs hire lower status non-tenured directors and coordinators to roster and staff the first-year courses, fully emulating the English department structure that helped to trigger the development of independents. Perhaps

bureaucratic culture is so driven by the principle of resemblance that we are doomed to reproduce that which we set out to replace; perhaps the only alternative is to be forever entrepreneurial, forever compelled to adapt, a stranger in a strange land, never quite at home. For here we are, some 40 years after our first declaration of independence, unsettled even about what to call our field, surely the greatest identity project of all.

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