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This essay draws upon an extraordinary amount of life experience to distill the basic tenets of success in the academic institutions. It offers insights and advice no new or old academician should ignore. The authors have served as deans of business schools and more. They all have thorough and demonstrated understanding of how academic organizations operate. Their advice and admonishments go beyond clichés. There is a vast amount of wisdom in their words. Pay heed and thrive!

Academic Street Smarts

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For the last several years, we have presented a session at the annual Southeast DSI meetings entitled "Academic Street Smarts" with a subtitle that varies from year to year. These sessions have been offered as a mini-conference on faculty development. Among the subtitles we have used are: "The Value of Regional Professional Meetings" and "What They Don't Teach You in the Ph.D. Program About Being a Faculty Member!" For the recent 2006 meeting, the subtitle of our presentation was "Promotion and Tenure Problems and Pitfalls" and the tentative subtitle for 2007 is "The Care and Feeding of Students."

The four of us who have been doing these sessions represent almost 150 years of combined university level academic experience, including some 90 years in administrative positions. We have all progressed through the tenure and promotion processes, on both sides of the desk, and have all served in various administrative roles, including as deans at AACSB accredited business schools. In addition, we have all served as members and chairs of AACSB visit teams and have thus reviewed faculty credentials at a number of business schools. We believe this gives us the "been there, done that" perspective that allows us to offer the following advice and counsel from our previous sessions at the SE DSI meetings, and which

is presented here with the caution of *caveat lector*—let the reader beware.

Establish Career Goals Early

One's primary goals for an academic career at a university should be established early on and, in addition to attaining academic rank and tenure, may even include serving in academic administrative positions. But there is more to consider. It is also important to select a university with an appropriate Carnegie classification for your personality and goals (i.e., a teaching, research, or mixed focus institution) and even to identify a geographic location that will support your desired life style and family preferences.

While the first items on this list are obvious, it may seem odd to include a priority for where you want to live in an examination of career goals but personal preferences are important too! In fact, the satisfaction and happiness you and your family receive from your selection of a university's locale may well have a significant impact on your ability to establish a successful academic career. It really is not possible to separate your professional and personal lives over a 30 or 40 year career; and if your home life is not happy, then chances are that your professional life will not be either. Remember: Faculty members are people first!

Professional enjoyment is perhaps best correlated with the nature of the university selected for one's faculty position. Universities, whether flagship, research, comprehensive, or undergraduate-only, are all rewarding in their own rights. The key is to match your interests with the university's demands. Often for faculty coming out of a doctoral program, the choice of a first university position is heavily influenced by one's dissertation chair who wants his or her students placed in the most prestigious schools in order to increase his or her personal reputation. But not every new assistant professor is capable of succeeding in a flagship program and many do not even want to go to one but they are too afraid to chance alienating their chair, especially before the dissertation is signed off. Thus for many, finding the right match may require changing universities; this may happen either at the beginning of an academic career due to life style and/or tenure issues, or later, when your interests and/or the expectations of the original university have evolved in ways that no longer match each other. In either case, it is better to move on than feel like a second-class citizen or get to a point where you become the constant complainer.

Tenure is the single most important faculty decision a university makes, as it is a career long commitment to the faculty member that may be broken only in the most unusual of circumstances. Thus, the faculty member should give the tenure process the respect it deserves from the beginning. If there is any way around it, do not leave your Ph.D. program in an ABD status. Finish the dissertation before taking your first faculty position so as to not use up the "probationary period" completing the doctoral degree. Since virtually all universities use a six year probationary period, they expect to receive a full measure of accomplishments from the faculty member beyond his or her degree completion. Those few programs that do not may be more interested in fostering an environment that looks at ABDs as cheap, disposable labor rather than in enhancing the long-term human capital of their faculty.

Once you are successful in obtaining tenure (and in most universities, promotion to associate professor tends to occur at the same time as tenure), skip the post tenure vacation that many seem to take and which may last for years—or even for the rest of their careers. Celebrate, but do not procrastinate! Having established an appropriate productivity level, a set of professional skills, and the work ethic to achieve this milestone, do not let it evaporate with extended vacations. Fields of expertise are dynamic and your professional competency can be lost very rapidly if you do not keep up. Set your sights on becoming a full professor from the very beginning and do not "retire on active duty" once the promotion to associate professor and tenure hurdles have been overcome.

As a caution to new faculty, do not put the cart before the horse in seeking academic administration appointments. Tenure and promotions are granted for academic accomplishments with little regard for administrative service contributions. At a minimum, a faculty member should be a tenured associate professor before accepting a significant administrative assignment; and even then, the pipeline for the promotion to professor should be full before proceeding. Initial administrative appointments are often very time consuming and are only the first step towards becoming a dean, vice president, provost, or president. If you do decide to enter the administrative career track, you should also expect to change universities every few years in order to take advantage of increasingly responsible opportunities.

Know the Criteria for Performance Evaluations

Faculty are evaluated and rewarded through their contributions in teaching, research, and service and every university establishes its expectations with regard to the quantity and quality of output required in each contribution area. When faculty interests and university expectations coincide, a long productive relationship can result. When they do not, the faculty member will generally end up seeking a position at another university.

Excellent faculty members commit a significant amount of time to the teaching dimension whether it is on a 6, 9, 12, or even a 15-hour load. A 6 hour load with 2 preparations and 100 plus students in each section will generally require more effort than a 9-hour load with a single preparation and 30 students in each section. If you are involved with a doctoral program, even a seminar with only 5 doctoral students may be overwhelming. Faculty should carefully consider the number of preparations, the number of sections, the number of students per section, and the course levels they are assigned in negotiating with the department chairperson so they can maximize their teaching performance. Faculty must accept responsibility for demonstrating their prowess in the classroom and should not depend on student evaluations as the only measure of that performance. Teaching portfolios are of major importance in documenting your role as a conscientious teacher and should include peer evaluations of your classroom performance by your colleagues in addition to your personal teaching philosophy. While it is difficult for everyone to be an award-winning teacher, all faculty should strive to be better than average.

With regard to scholarly activity, the outlets for research investigations should be targeted before the data are collected and the selected outlets must meet the university's minimum quality expectations which are often judged by acceptance rates. Investigate the reputation of the outlet and submit each work to the one with the best reputation that might conceivably accept it. Often in the early years, the best opportunity to publish in the most preeminent journals in one's field comes from material developed in the doctoral dissertation. Do not waste the good stuff! There will be enough material left over for additional, lesser outlets including meeting presentations; but understand that refereed journal articles are not interchangeable with papers published in proceedings. For a tenure track faculty member, refereed journal publications are the "coin of the realm." In fact,

if you do not target your scholarship properly, you may find out that a publication or presentation in what is viewed by your school as an inferior outlet may not only *not* count positively for you, but may actually subtract from your performance evaluation—this is especially true of “vanity press” publications. Finally, junior faculty should be leery of writing books because at P&T time, it is always better to show 15 refereed journal articles than one text book with 15 chapters.

The third leg of the proverbial three legged academic stool is service and this includes service to your institution, to your professional organizations, and to your community. The caveat here is to be responsive to service requests without over-committing yourself—especially as a junior faculty member—as service will not reduce the expectations for teaching and research. Service is thus a necessary, but not sufficient, requirement for P&T.

Having said that, service obligations in professional organizations can provide excellent opportunities to build support networks, including finding a mentor to guide your career development. Elected officer positions in a key organization in your discipline can provide you with professional stature as your career matures and help you hone your leadership skills for future administrative positions. The friendships and networks you develop in professional organizations will serve you well when you need letters of support for P&T, external reviewers of your dossier, or references for a job move.

Travel to professional meetings should be looked at as an investment in your career regardless of whether all of your expenses are reimbursed by your school or not. None of us have ever received 100 percent of the costs incurred for professional travel, but we have done it over the years because it was important to do—to be a part of the professorate and the academy. Your investment in these organizations will be returned to you many times over before you retire.

Likewise, for more middle career and senior faculty, it is possible that undertaking major on-campus service commitments (e.g., Chair of the Faculty Senate) that are respected by the institution’s administrators may serve as an entrée to future administrative appointments. Finally, exceptional performance in local community service activities that leads to positive visibility for the faculty member and the institution can also be valuable as icing on the cake; just do not try to make it the cake.

Keep a PMA: Positive Mental Attitude

Attitude is critically important to any career. Become an active participant in the activities of your institution by making informed, thoughtful contributions to the discussion but stay away from “hallway” gossip and avoid being the resident critic. After a decision has been made, make the best of it and be a team player. Forget making star treatment demands and understand that all faculty want Tuesday-Thursday classes with no 8:00 a.m. or night classes. Take your turn—your colleagues will support you for it!

Whiners are marginalized—and usually they never figure out why. Years ago, Wallace S. Sayre made a statement that has been often quoted since: “Academic politics is the most vicious kind of politics, because the stakes are so low.”² While this is very true, and every department seems to have at least one faculty member who is constantly complaining, if you are always blaming the ubiquitous “they” (i.e., the administration) who are “out to stick it to the faculty” for everything that happens, it will do you no long term good. If you are a whiner, your colleagues may listen politely at first, but after awhile, when they see you coming down the hall, they will turn the other way or duck into another colleague’s office. Why? Because most of them realize that they have the very best of all possible jobs and they really do not want to hear you go on and on about your negative issue of the day.

Not only will your colleagues notice your negativism, your department

chair will as well and you will start to wonder why you do not seem to have many friends at work, why your schedule is not as desirable as others, and why you are not appointed to important task forces and committees. Most likely you will rationalize this as just another reinforcement of “them” being out to get you, while you keep thinking that you are the only one who is aware of all of the things “they” are doing wrong. This, in turn, becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy and you will become increasingly marginalized and despondent. Maybe having a good attitude is not everything, but it is way ahead of whatever is in second place!

As an aside, in our collective time as teachers and administrators we have rarely, if ever, met anyone with any kind of administrative responsibility who was truly “out to stick it to the faculty.” In other words, there really is no “they” or “them.”

Understand What Salary Compression Is

Take it as a given: there will be salary compression no matter how well you perform or what school employs you. There is nothing new about this phenomenon; 30 years ago the ratio of salaries for new hires to salaries for established faculty members was just about what it is now and the ratios of salaries by discipline were about the same as well. You either have to get over the salary issue or move to another school every four or five years because you will make large salary increases in this business only by moving and even that has a finite limit. Moreover, moving for the sake of a few dollars is tough—especially if you have a family. More than one faculty member who moved for what he or she thought was a significant pay increase found out too late that because of increased taxes, a higher general cost of living in the new area, and a larger mortgage payment, the differential was quickly consumed—plus the faculty member lost 6 months of professional productivity. If salary is the only major issue you have with your current position, make sure you get a really good deal to move—a general rule of

thumb is that you better get at least a 25 percent raise to make it worthwhile.

While you may think that your current salary is terribly low, remember that you will never convince your colleagues in the liberal arts that your relatively higher salary is merited because of the law of supply and demand or that you feel compressed, given what you make. Unless you are at a large university with an engineering program, a law school, or a medical school, business faculty are generally the focus of the criticism by the rest of the campus as being overpaid and under-worked. As various salary surveys have shown, a campus with a business school—especially one that is AACSB accredited—has higher overall salaries than a pure liberal arts campus. There is truth to the saying that a rising tide lifts all boats. We should never apologize for business school salaries and while liberal arts professors are, indeed, worth more than they make, we are too.

Know How Private Consulting Fits in

Consulting provides opportunities for you to share your knowledge with business practitioners and affords you insights into the “real world” that you can bring back into the classroom. But you should not expect to be extrinsically rewarded for it twice—once by the company and again by the university. By all means, take consulting jobs so you can keep one foot in the real world; and charge your clients as much as the market will bear. Your creative consulting will make you better as a teacher and as a researcher by keeping you current on what actual businesses are doing. In turn, by being a better teacher and researcher, you will do better at merit raise time because you are a more valuable faculty resource. But if you think that being a consultant, *per se*, should factor into your campus performance appraisal, you will be, and should be, disappointed.

Be a Good University Citizen

Going to graduation is part of your job and your students are appreciative

of your attendance—they have earned it. Go every time and stay a few minutes afterwards to share this joyous occasion with them and their families. Attending graduation is not a burden; it is the punctuation mark on your “*raison d’être*.”

We live in an increasingly politically correct society where everything we do or say can be scrutinized and motives can be attributed to it regardless of intent. Pure academic freedom, which originally was created to allow faculty to speak freely in the classroom without fear of retribution from the king or the Pope, is a thing of the past—assuming it ever existed at all. These days, anyone who is offended by something you say can accuse you of creating a hostile environment whether it is in the classroom, in the hallways, or anywhere on campus. Some things you say can get you fired immediately and ruin your career. Others can keep you in hot water for years, and even cause you to be denied tenure or a promotion. Stick to your subject matter.

Be a person of integrity. Do not misrepresent yourself to anyone and never, NEVER lie to your boss. If you do become an administrator, never tell different stories or make different promises to different people as they will always compare notes and you will be found out. Do not pad your CV or put false information on it. Even though there are as many colleges and universities as there are, academia is still a small world and someone will catch you. Stories abound of faculty listing false titles, non-existent publications, places they did not work, degrees they did not earn, and even pretending to be someone else they knew was out of the country at a point in time. Also be logical in your dealings with administrators. For example, do not ask for release time to do research, and then sign up to teach an overload course in the same semester. And if you complain about not having enough time to do research, do not sign up for a full teaching load in the summer. You cannot have it both ways—at least not for very long!

Practice Outstanding Faculty Ethics

By bringing up integrity and the need to be a good academic citizen, we have moved into the realm of professional ethics. While one of the emphases in business schools today is the teaching of ethics and ethical behavior, we tend to be more concerned with the ethical behavior of our students, our graduates, or the external corporate world, than we are with the ethical behavior of faculty.

The area of faculty ethics that one hears and reads about most often is plagiarism. There have been a number of high profile cases reported in the press in recent years involving faculty (and even university presidents) who have failed to give proper attribution to the sources of their information and have thus passed off the works of others as their own.³ Ethical behavior by faculty is much broader, much more complex, and often much more subtle than this, however. Faculty starting out need to be aware of the ethical land mines they might encounter, so they can avoid being either perpetrators or victims.

All of the following points are based on our actual experiences, so they are not hypothetical. Sometimes the faculty involved in these situations escaped with only a besmirched reputation; but for others, the consequences were much more severe. Faculty colleagues have even been known to commit suicide when their professional sins have come to light! While you may recognize colleagues who have engaged in some of the following behaviors, we hope you personally will never do so yourselves.

- As we just said, present your work clearly and with attributions. If you refer to someone else’s work, cite it. Err on the side of too many citations rather than too few. Just as we find it easy to catch students when they plagiarize, it is also easy to catch us when we do.
- Always include and formally acknowledge students and colleagues who have contributed to your work. If the student has done some or all of the research, add the student as a co-author. Likewise, do not insist the

student add your name to everything with which you may have had only a passing association. The general rule is that if the contribution is significant enough, give the person a co-authorship.

- Along the same line, some faculty insist upon having their names added to any works you discuss with them, no matter how mundane, trivial, or peripheral the discussion. These people can be difficult to deal with and colleagues will quickly avoid talking with them.
- It is natural for faculty to talk among themselves about their research ideas. If you use someone else's ideas, be sure that person knows you are doing so and is comfortable with how you are treating their ideas. Do not let anyone be surprised at seeing their ideas in print in your articles or books. Because of having this happen, we are aware of colleagues who will not discuss their research ideas in public for fear that someone will steal them—paranoid maybe, but it happens.
- Regardless of the “publish or perish” pressures you might feel, do not fake your research. There have been several recent, high profile examples of this reported in the media, especially in the hard sciences and in medical research, and those who have been exposed for falsifying their data have had their careers ruined.⁴
- Do not exploit your power over students (e.g., as a dissertation chair) to do such things as extracting agreements about the future use of research. The student cannot negotiate from a position of equality because you have the power to hold up or stop the completion of his or her degree. The same can be said of the relationship between senior faculty and untenured, junior faculty.
- Avoid extramural activities with students, male or female, regardless of your gender. This is a controversial subject on many campuses and some have even gone so far as to establish explicit rules concerning student-faculty relationships. If there ever is a disagreement, the person in authority is automatically held responsible.

One charge of sexual harassment can ruin a career.

- Be positive about your employer in public or do not say anything at all. This does not mean that you are supposed to give up your right to express your feelings, but there are plenty of appropriate venues on campus to complain about “local” issues—e.g., faculty meetings and faculty senate meetings. In general, it is best not to vent about your employer at the Rotary Club lunch, or even at off campus professional meetings, as negative comments tend to have a boomerang effect and will ultimately find their way back to your department chair, dean, and/or provost.
- Follow university guidelines concerning outside activities for pay and request approval before commencing the work. Administrators get very upset when they learn of their faculty moonlighting with a local competitor—and so do accrediting agencies. If you want to teach at another university, do it overseas, perhaps as part of a faculty exchange program. Most schools explicitly allow and even encourage this as long as it does not interfere with your normal teaching responsibilities.
- Do your job. If you are scheduled to teach, be there. The only valid excuses for not being in class should be related to events such as attending professional meetings or personal and family illnesses. Weeks of “library research assignments” or “group project meetings” on a syllabus should not replace the class contributions of a well prepared professor.
- Keep up to date. There are a lot of jokes going around about faculty who lecture from notes that have turned yellow. Make sure your notes, cases, and examples are current and relevant. Read both the professional journals and the popular press and incorporate what you read into your classes.
- Last in our current list, but certainly not least, uphold your grading standards and never compromise your professionalism.

Conclusion

What we have sought to present here is largely common sense but after our collective 150 years of experience, we never cease to be amazed at what supposedly intelligent people will do. Think before you act. Plan your career starting with your ultimate goals and then develop a strategy to get there. There are no shortcuts in academe so you should be prepared to work and work hard. The rewards of a successful academic career are not always monetary but they are well worth the effort. All of us have had students over the years say things like “I hated your class at the time but now, ten years later, I wish I had paid more attention,” or “You are the reason I became a _____.” It is like the MasterCard commercial: cost of three academic degrees, \$ (pick a number); cost of attending years of professional meetings, \$ (pick a number); cost of being a tenured full professor, PRICELESS.

Endnotes

1. The order of the authors is alphabetical and does not represent any differential in contribution to this article.
2. Wallace S. Sayre, as quoted in Issawi, Charles, *Issawi's Laws of Social Motion*, NY: Hawthorn Books (1973).
3. June, Audrey Williams, “President of Central Connecticut State U. Is Accused of Plagiarism,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 10, 2004. Available online at: <http://chronicle.com/daily/2004/03/2004031005n.htm>. Standler, Ronald B., “Plagiarism in Colleges in USA,” 2000. Available at: <http://www.rbs2.com/plag.htm>
4. Holden, Constance, “STEM CELL RESEARCH: Korean Cloner Admits Lying About Oocyte Donations.” *Science*, December 2, 2005: Vol. 310. no. 5753, pp. 1402-1403. For a full listing of the events related to the stem cell research fraud perpetrated by Hwang, *et al.*, see: “Special Online Collection: Hwang *et al.* and Stem Cell Issues,” available online at: <http://www.science.org/sciext/hwang2005/> ■