



## Leadership in Academia Workshop Summary

Sponsored by the Administrative Leadership Committee

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This workshop, led by Catherine A. Allen (co-founder of Reboot Partners, LLC and Chairman and CEO, The Santa Fe Group), offered participants the chance to create their own vision of what they want in their life and to develop a strategic plan on accomplishing their goals. Her first question to the group was “what does it take to lead in academia today?” Cathy stressed that we must fully understand the demographics we are serving – mainly the large group of millennials which are making a huge impact not only on campuses but around the world. She also challenged us to be forward thinking and look for how education is changing and how it might change in the future. We must fully understand the environment in which we work, think strategically, have a global perspective, learn to collaborate and obtain a diversity of opinions in order to be effective leaders. Most of all, we must remain flexible, adaptable and be open to innovation. A leadership vision should be a plan three to five years out; your strategic plan should be what you are going to do within the next year to work towards the vision.

Cathy also emphasized understanding technology and using it creatively. “Linked In” was mentioned as an important business tool that everyone should learn to use and leverage their professional image. The ability to communicate in a world of technology is becoming more important – how do you reach and communicate to a diverse workforce? How do you teach them? Cathy suggested the following:

1. Pay attention to trends – listen to futurists, look at other industries
2. Let go of perceived power and enable other people – Team management, less hierarchal
3. Really get to know people and their motivation.

Women underrepresented in leadership positions because many women are stymied by self-doubt or are not encouraged to take on leadership roles. There may be a lack of mentors in higher positions to help other women succeed – however, Cathy encouraged us to find not a single mentor but many mentors. We should have different mentors for different issues; for example a mentor for research, a mentor for teaching, a mentor for committees and leadership. Women also need to find their own voice in promoting themselves and letting others know of their accomplishments and know we often undervalue our own skills. Women also need to understand the “game” which is played out in every company or academic organization – who are the decision makers on campus, how do things get done, who can influence the decision maker?

The group was then challenged to list five skills or abilities that are marketable in today's academic or business environment. Everyone shared their skills which ranged from having a passion to help others, being a creative thinker, being good with budgets and problem solving to having a great sense of humor. Our next task would take place when we returned to work – to find five people and ask them what they think our leadership skills are. Cathy emphasized that understanding how others see you can help us understand our own strengths.

Rebooting your career. Cathy recommends taking a sabbatical or perhaps a mini sabbatical to give ourselves the gift of time to process what we truly want. Before we disengage, we should challenge ourselves to think hard about our current work environment and what needs to change as a whole, understand what changes we want to personally make and then start to imagine what the next chapter of our career would be like. Cathy encouraged us to meditate, journal or walk to let ourselves envision the future we truly want. Once we have that vision, we need to create a plan to get there.

The next exercise was to create a “bucket list” of what ten things do we want to do in this lifetime. This could be anything! Think of our dreams as a child, a goal we may have had a long time ago. We should not be held back from putting on this list the things we think are “impossible” due to time, money, family or other obligations. Once we wrote down what we wanted, we then chose five or six larger goals or areas to concentrate on.

The larger goals could be something like Creativity, Health and Exercise, Relationships, Spirituality, Leadership and Finance. With our own larger goals, we created a “Goals” plan for this upcoming year. Basically, we took our larger goals then listed under each one, five actionable items we can do to reach those goals. For example:

Goal #1 Leadership:

1. Chair a campus wide committee
2. Network one day a week in the faculty lunch room
3. Seek out a mentor for leadership
4. Read a book on leadership
5. Get funding to attend a leadership workshop

Goal #2 Health and Exercise:

1. Go for a walk at lunch around campus
2. Take a class at the gym 2X a week
3. Take a class on cooking tofu
4. Purchase and use a Fitbit

5. Enlist a friend to do something active with me

Cathy recommended a few books for us to read after the workshop. One was “Fast Forward: How women can achieve power and purpose” By Melanne Vermeer and Kim Azzarelli. This book interviews seventy women who have held positions of power such as Hillary Clinton, Madeleine Albright, Maria Shriver and Meryl Streep to encourage women and men to understand the contributions to the global economy women have made in recent decades.

Cathy and her colleagues (Nancy Bearg, Rita Foley and Jaye Smith) have also written books “Reboot your life” and “The Retirement Boom”. Reboot your life discusses how to make the most of our sabbatical or mini-sabbatical and come back to work recharged and with a plan. This book was given to all workshop participants. The Retirement Boom delves into how Baby Boomers are redefining retirement by using it as a chance to reinvent their lives. Their website is <http://rebootbreak.com/>.

Cathy finished her workshop by encouraging everyone to create a marketing and social media plan for ourselves. This is imperative to get your name out and create opportunities to collaborate with peers, industry, and other disciplines. She also recommended that not only should we keep a personal Linked In account updated and professional but think about creating our own website, perhaps seek out TV, print and radio interviews, get involved with industry organizations, consult, and even get involved with public policy which is having a huge impact on higher education today. Expand our networking to create leadership possibilities.

In response to Cathy’s workshop, the Administrative Leadership Committee is hoping to offer a workshop on branding yourself and social media when ITAA meets in Vancouver. Be on the lookout and sign up early – it will be an invaluable experience!

*Submitted by Lynn M. Boorady, Chair, Administrative Leadership Committee*