"Leadership Transitions and its Implications For Strategic Planning"

Researcher:

Eman T. Torkstani

University of Hawaii@Manoa

Director of Planning and Development Department

Financial Sustainability Office, King Abdul-Aziz University, Jeddah 21589, Saudi Arabia

1. Executive Summary

Dotlich and Ciampa contend that "Business is a relay race that never ends. Of all the important transitions an organization must face, repeatedly and over time, perhaps the most difficult is the passing of the baton from one leader to the next"[1]. An organization must institutionalize and continually improve its leadership transition plan in order to excel. My research focused on the role that HR could play to improve KAU's leadership transitions by finding out how "front-line" stakeholders, i.e. middle management and their employees, experience existing organizational changes. My findings led me to the following observations: 1) effective leadership transitions are important to an organization's ability to achieve strategic goals, and can be generalized to Saudi culture and organizations 2) Problematic transitions cause the same kinds of problems for employee stakeholders across cultures 3) Cultural factors can be a great obstacle to organizational success. This study provides some preliminary insights into the role that culture plays in determining the feasibility of applying "best practices" in Human Resource Management. I have made some recommendations that I judged to have merit and a good possibility for providing some improvement to the current KAU dysfunctional transition processes.

Keywords: Strategic planning; Leadership transitions; Higher education; Modeling SWOT .

Background

King Abdul-Aziz University (KAU) was established as a private university in 1967 to bring higher education to Western Saudi Arabia. In 1974 the university was made a public university by the government. The adoption of KAU by the central government was crucial to its evolution to the modern university that it is today. From its modest beginning of fewer than one hundred students enrolled, KAU's enrolment has grown to more than 180, 212 today, consisting of both male and female students. Because KAU is a relatively young institution, it did not have many established traditions. KAU has been quite open to new academic programs, new organizational structures and new academic and institutional collaborations with regional higher educational communities. Hence, "change" has always been a stated institutional value.

2. Problem Identification: Fit with Corporate Strategic Plan

Effective leadership is crucial for organizational success. How successfully KAU conducts its leadership changes greatly impacts whether KAU can reach its strategic goal of achieving excellence, and hence, to progress towards a future of greater prestige, relevance, improved efficiency, academic and research prowess. If KAU does not manage leadership changes effectively, it is unlikely that KAU can achieve its strategic goals. Leaders at all levels are the ones who explain the purpose and benefits of KAU's strategic plan and each employee's role in it. Ineffective and indifferent leaders will subvert the institutional effort to achieve excellence.

Strategic Plan

Today, after more than 50 years of noteworthy development, KAU has aspirations to be an institution that is well regarded for its academic rigor and its culture of being an incubator of change. KAU is now made up of 6 regional branch universities and consists of many colleges, centers and institutes specializing in a variety of issues relevant to the advancement of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Although KAU has spent the first 50 years meeting and exceeding key parts of its founding mission, KAU now wants to try to solidify its reputation nationally and to build its prestige internationally as well.

The embrace of this "change" orientation was manifested as its first Strategic Plan in 2004, an institutional-wide mandated goal of achieving recognition as a global leader of higher education. Now in its 11th year of implementation, and the third edition of the strategic plan, the major long-term goal is to continue striving to be a leader in the higher education community by:

- Improving and developing accurate standards of assessments for student performance
- Encouraging and funding high-quality research and development initiatives
- Contributing to advancement of Saudi culture to meet modern challenges
- Garnering the trust and respect of society and the corporate world
- Optimizing investment of university resources and capabilities

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Ciampa, D., & Dotlich, D. (2015). Transitions at the Top: What Organizations Must Do to Make Sure New Leaders Succeed. (p.1)[1]

Leadership and its impact on KAU's Strategic Plan III

King Abdul-Aziz University has many departments and heads of departments. It also has separate men and women departments. Unstable leadership and poorly executed transitions have negatively affected KAU's ability to achieve its strategic goals. The leadership positions that I will address are those of administrative directors and vice-deans of departments in the women's section. These are positions that I have had most direct experience with and where I will return to work. My study identifies the challenges that KAU faces in this segment of its stakeholder community. My own observations led me to posit that KAU's strategic plan will not succeed until KAU confronts its leadership development challenges and its lack of preparation for successful leadership transitions. It would be reasonable to assume that conclusions reached in this particular group of KAU stakeholders can then be extrapolated to the entire institution because the positions in this study are key components of its operations. I hope that my findings will offer some recommendations that would help KAU close the gap between its institutional aspirations and the achievement of its strategic goals.

3. Stakeholders' Interests
Stakeholders at King Abdul Aziz University (KAU) are made up of the following interest groups:

1. 180,212 male and female students
2. Faculty and researchers
3. Academic faculty responsible for implementing its educational and social services mission for students.
4. Administrative leaders and employees responsible for supporting the academic faculty and students
5. Personnel Department responsible for record keeping and payment of salaries for university employees.
6. Top leadership of KAU responsible for the strategic mission, fiduciary management and perpetuation and future of the organization.
7. Education Ministry charged with uplifting society through education

The stakeholder groups that I chose to study were from middle management and the employees they supervised. I selected these groups because they are the rank and file groups who are ultimately the ones who have to directly implement any changes mandated by the strategic plan. Without their engagement or "buy-in", all intermediate objectives on the way to achieving KAU's strategic vision are easily subverted. Finally, I've worked a decade among these stakeholders and have direct experience and contacts, making it possible for me to obtain cooperation for my project.

The Research:

My study included:

1. Interviews via social media with a group of 15 administrative directors and employees at different seniority levels.
2. A Google Forms invitation to 15 vice-deans but only 4 responded
3. A Qualtrics online survey that received 104 responses from employees working in different campuses, departments and at various experience levels.

Vice-deans are responsible for implementing the university's educational policies, educational services and contributing to the achievement of KAU's strategic plan in the academic division. Additionally, she oversees all employees in the women's college, with both faculty and administrative heads reporting to her. Ultimately, she reports to the Dean in the Men's section of her department. Administrative directors report to vice-deans and are responsible for implementing administrative policies, budgets and employee regulations and work performance. They also serve as head "quartermaster" responsible for keeping the department equipped, supplied and repaired. Because there is no human resources section, she is also responsible for many tasks that a human resources professional would do, including record keeping and initiating training and professional development for her employees. In general, she is the "right-hand woman" of the vice-dean and does whatever is assigned to her.

In my current study for a MHRM, I have learnt the importance of quality leadership. Leaders are not only the possessors of "managerial authority" but persons who are the "influencers". In Built to Change, Lawler illustrates that Leadership is more than the personal characteristics: it includes setting a strategy, developing influential relationships with followers, designing organizations, and managing change within the organization and with followers to achieve desired outcomes'[2]. Successful leaders not only increase employees' satisfaction, but they also can boost performance, improve employee attitudes and behaviors, motivate and inspire employees, and contribute to the achievement of organization's

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Lawler, E. E., & Worley, C. G. (2006). Built to change: How to achieve sustained organizational effectiveness. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.[2]

strategic goals. "Leadership strategy is business strategy: No matter how much planning you do, no matter what you put on paper, the way people lead will have the greatest impact on both your business strategy"[3]

I've identified the following issues that I focused on:

- Effective characteristics and skills of leadership
- The effectiveness of leadership nomination and transition system
- Effective governance in term of strategy and execution, support, benchmark, criteria and standards for choosing leadership
- Employees desires and suggestion in leadership transition plans

My interview questions were written to collect information and elicit subjects' perspectives on the leadership change process and to solicit impressions about beliefs, attitudes, opinions, meanings and feelings about their experiences of leadership transitions. I interviewed a variety of employees from different departments and colleges, at different levels of responsibility, at different seniority levels and at different experience levels. I contacted them using social media like Skype, FaceTime and Tango. Details of all data gathered are available in the appendices to this paper. The following charts and graphs summarize my survey findings.

Figure 1: Job classification of Respondents
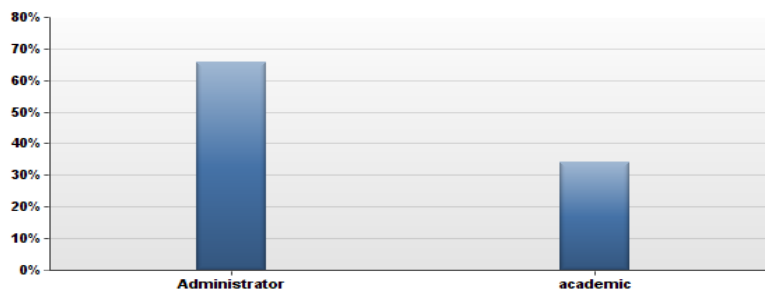
The bar chart shows the percent of employees who answered the survey from the administrative and the teacher sections. One reason why there were more responses from administrators might be because I worked ten years as a KAU administrator and more people knew whom I was than among the academic faculty. Another reason may be that administrative staff just tends to indulge in discussions about their jobs more and are hence, more eager to share their opinions. Academic faculty spends more time with students and tends to be more individualistic and reluctant to involve themselves in university politics.

Figure 2: Optimal Term for a Vice-Dean

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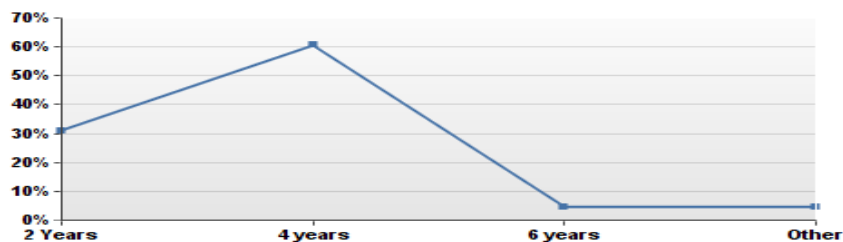
[3] Deloitte Consulting, (2012) PowerPoint presentation by Tammy lecture.(Wrapping Up Employee Engagement)

Currently, vice-dean assignments at KAU are two-year terms that are renewable for two more times. In this survey, 59% of respondents indicated a four-year term is best because it provides an adequate period of time within which to set goals, implement changes and achieve them. Four years of stable leadership also brings a degree of achieve predictability. Surprisingly, 32% of respondents were satisfied with the status quo. They thought the two-year term gives more people the opportunity to step into leadership positions where they too can showcase their work, abilities and experience. In other words, they were worried that longer terms would reduce their opportunities for professional upward mobility if leaders spent more time in the position.

Figure 3: Optimal Terms for Administrative Directors
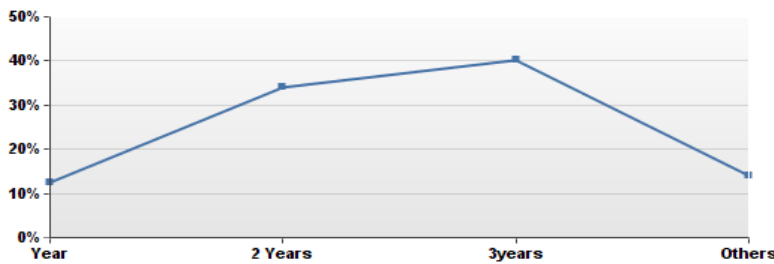
The contracts of current administrative directors at KAU are one year and renewable for up to 10 times. 40% of respondents preferred three-year terms because they allow them enough time to get to know their employees, familiarize themselves with work procedures and transactions and time to set and achieve departmental objectives. Three years is more productive for those wanting to gain leadership experience. The next favored contract term was a two-year term, selected by 34% of respondents. Some reasons for their choices included: giving more employees leadership experience and invigorating the college's management procedures. In general, a term of two to three years seemed ideal, chosen by 75% of respondents, exceeding the current 1-year term

The following pie graphs show the participation of employees who elected their leaders, i.e. directors and vice-deans. More employees took part in the selection of their administrative directors than those in the academic section. Only about a third (29%) of employees were able to vote for the vice-dean, whereas about half (51%) felt they had contributed to the election of the administrative director. As before, the administrative employees seem to engage in the political process more than the academic faculty. KAU has software on their website for soliciting employees' nominations for administrative leadership but not for vice-deans. This nomination process is unreliable because employees can even nominate directors whom they do not work for, i.e. in other departments or colleges. This nomination process seems arbitrary and unpredictable and hence, guaranteed to engender distrust and indifference. It's more "window-dressing" than a genuine tool to seek a stakeholder's feedback.

Figure 4: Participation of Employees in the Leadership Selection Process
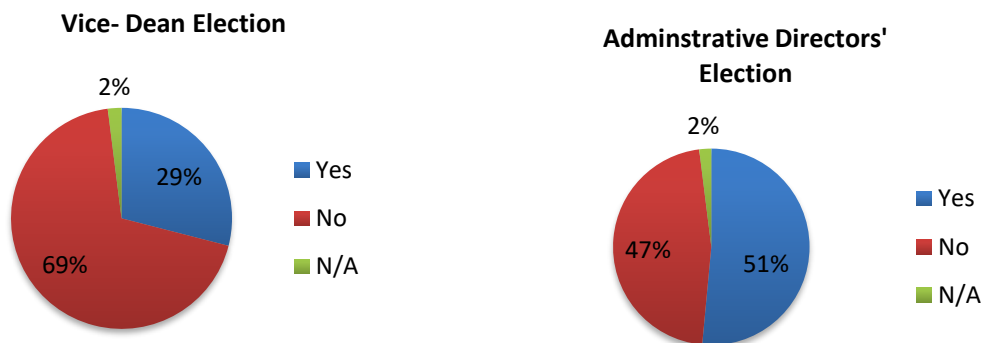
During the last six-years, 42% of employees reported that there were two vice-dean changes and 30% said they had three new vice-deans. This meant that most vice-deans occupied their positions for only one two-year term because KAU did not renew their contracts.

On the other hand, there was more stability in administrative leadership. Despite administrative directors' one-year contract, almost half (45%) of the employees said they had only two directors in the last six years. It appears administrative directors had their contracts renewed more often for up to three years. Furthermore, 28% reported only one administrative director change, meaning the director held the position for six year and perhaps more.

Figure 5: Frequency of Leadership Change
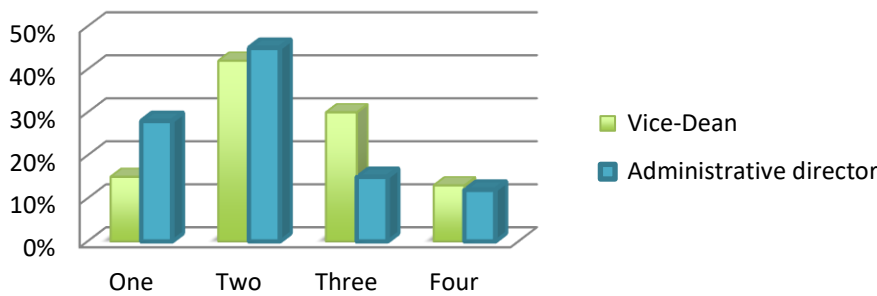
There were no reports of five or six administrative director changes in the six-year period. Despite the 1-year contracts, KAU routinely renewed directors' contracts. It appears that KAU has already applied the optimal term of 2-3 years for administrative directors, as employees preferred. Nevertheless, 28% of employees said one administrative director for six years was considered too long.

Figure 6: Vice-dean's Previous Administrative Experience
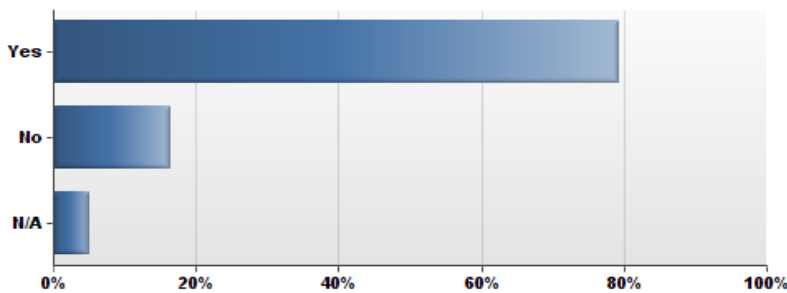
The graph depicts the percentage of employees who said that vice-deans had previous administrative experience. Seventy-nine percent reportedly had previous experience but 16% did not. Five percent of respondents don't know.

Figure 7: Employees' Opinion of Vice-deans' Efficacy
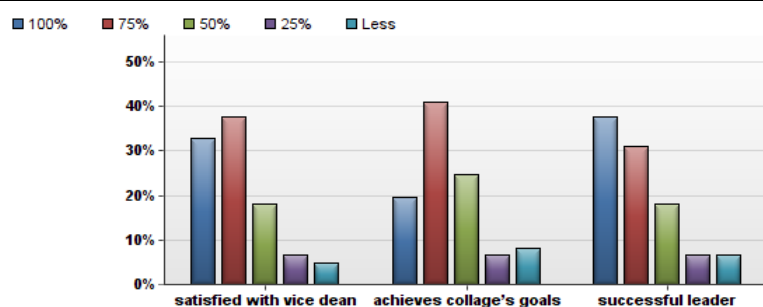
This second bar graph illustrates the employees' perception of the director's knowledge about work procedures, their satisfaction with their directors' knowledge, their assessment of whether their leaders were successful, and if the employees were satisfied with how their administrative directors were chosen.

Figure 8: Employees' Perspective of Administrative Director's Efficacy and How Transitions Happened
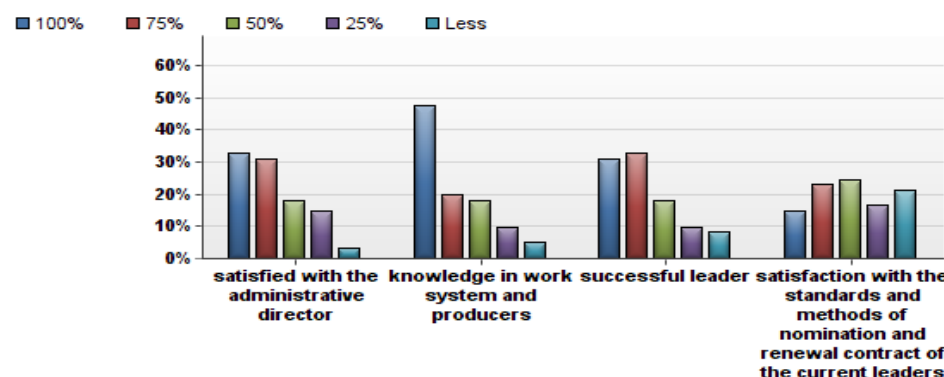
In general, employees in the academic section were quite satisfied (69%) with the job the vice-deans were doing; with 68% reporting that their vice-dean was successful in their jobs. More than half (60%) said their deans achieved their college's goals. In administrative sections, somewhat fewer (64%) employees were satisfied with their director. About the same proportion of employees (67%) thought their leaders were successful. Almost three quarters of employees thought their administrative directors had adequate knowledge of office operations and policies. In contrast, 62% of employees were dissatisfied with the criteria and methods of nomination for renewing leadership contracts.

Summary of Most Frequently Offered Suggestions

I received 54 suggestions from employees about improving the leadership transitions process. The following are some of the most frequently given:

All employees, whether in academic or administrative departments, should have the right to nominate and elect candidates for leadership positions.

- The nomination system must be monitored to avoid nepotism.
- There should be advance and public announcement of available leadership positions.
- KAU should set a clear set of criteria and standards for qualifying nominations.
- KAU should fairly and impartially apply the standards in the selection of candidates based on merit, i.e. experience, leadership skills and good reputation.
- There should be fair and regular performance evaluation for extending leadership terms.

Perceived Challenges for Employees During Leadership Transitions

The most common challenges identified by respondents were as follows:

Contending with personalities of newly appointed leaders

New leaders lacking knowledge and experience in departmental procedures they were meant to oversee

- Leaders who possess poor or no leadership skills
- Inappropriate and mistreatment of employees
- Discriminatory behavior towards some employees for a variety of reasons
- The relatively short contract terms make it difficult for employees to adjust to fast leadership turnover
- Insufficient time for adjusting to leadership styles
- Insufficient time to adjust to new procedures before yet another leader arrives with new ones

In summary, there were three main issues identified by both supervisors and supervisees among the 123 responses I received. These were all related to leadership transitions:

1. KAU does not currently have a proactive, orderly and transparent procedure for selecting new leaders. There is no identified selection committee and a dearth of criteria and standards.
2. Contract terms for leaders were not long enough for them to achieve departmental or strategic goals.
3. There has been a lack of direction or support from top management for mid-level leaders like vice-deans and administrative directors to set, assess or achieve departmental or strategic goal.

5. Internal/External SWOT

Strengths

KAU is the largest university in the Western Region of Saudi Arabia. Over the years its reputation has indeed risen as evidenced by its larger and growing applicant pool and its enrolment of a greater number of high achieving students. A majority of academic departments at KAU is now accredited by the higher education community in Saudi Arabia, regionally in the Middle East and the strategic plan aims for recognition by the global educational community. KAU has also adopted strategies from well-regarded quality management experts to improve capacity, competencies and efficacies among its various administrative departments. The aspiration for improvement exists. The university is keen to develop its faculty and researchers to retain them and hopes to establish a human resources department to manage its human talent. I am an example of this commitment to train a new generation of leaders to establish a rational system of managing human resources. I was fortunate enough to be chosen to receive a fully funded scholarship to obtain my MHRM degree. There are diverse and good choices of programs provided for undergraduates and a willingness to try interdisciplinary and experiential education. In general, there is a positive campus environment for both students and employees—a feeling of safety and well being on campus.

Weaknesses

Two major weaknesses that KAU has is its adherence to established bureaucratic processes and perpetuation of traditional Saudi cultural norms within a professional environment. As a public, bureaucratic institution, its main attributes are: formality (copious rules and regulations dictating written memos, requests, multiple levels of approvals, proper forms, procedural steps, etc.) and mandated, rigidly enforced, top-down, multiple levels of hierarchical authority. This organizational structure and its resulting communication pattern impede innovation and encourage a preservation of the status quo, no matter its negative impact on operational efficiency or strategic goals. Examples include:

- Numerous hierarchical levels result in widening spans of control while rules, regulations, policies and procedures proliferate

- Restriction of the amount of discretion an individual has within the organization to solve problems, be flexible or to take initiative

- Poor coordination among departments because of time-consuming procedures with multiple hand-offs and indirect communications among those who implement whatever is planned. A straightforward mechanical change like electronic transactions took a long time to implement because it needed approval by all levels of leadership. Only top management at KAU has decision-making authority and even then, top management in the women's section has to seek approval from the Dean of the men's section. When changes are ordered not all departments comply in a timely or coordinated manner causing further delay because those who were compliant had to investigate the disruption caused by those who did not—of course, by following proper channels of communication up the hierarchy of one department and then down the hierarchy of the other.
- There are still some KAU departments that are yet to be accredited. Many are still in initial stages of establishment while others have yet to produce noteworthy results that can be evaluated.
- Frequent turnover of faulty leadership because of short-term contracts issued by KAU has negatively impacted a department's ability to achieve long-term goals.
- Frequently, departmental leaders lack leadership skills causing divisiveness among department members. Collaboration and commitment to departmental goals are not possible when a supervisor fails to lead.
- There is a poorly organized, unstated and rarely implemented system of evaluation and reward for faculty, administrators and employees. This unpredictable work environment inflicts a great deal of insecurity, encourages work ethics and engenders low morale professionally.
- KAU does not have a formalized system of nomination and selection of its leaders. There is also no institutionalized plan or procedure for effective and monitored leadership transitions.
- Nepotism is rampant and tolerated. Political appointments are accepted as routine. Tribal and familial connections trumps merit or institutional needs.
- Leader of the men's division of the university oversees the management of the women's section. Women's role in writing the strategic plan is either minimal or "ornamental". The glass ceiling is impenetrable.
- Even the training of one employee requires multiple bureaucratic procedures and justifications through the entire departmental hierarchy before being approved. By the
- Time the approval is given, months have gone by and multiple mistakes have been made, reinforcing the "What's the point" attitude.
- There is no Human Resources Management department or expertise making it almost impossible to identify talent, reward merit or keep track of the training history within the KAU workforce. Supervisors who usually have no understanding of the educational process or content make arbitrary decisions about allocating the time or resources for such awards. Even the best and brightest are discouraged and demoralized when taking on the task of being trained.
- The lack of open communication from one supervisory level to another through the authority chain obstructs front-line employees' understanding of the university's strategic plan and their role within it. Lack of engagement by implementers of strategies does not bode well for any plan's success.
- Because of a lack of leadership and no transparent performance evaluation system, workloads are unevenly distributed further generating resentments and frequent turnover of staff.

In summary, though there is high ambition for KAU to become a world-class university among its top leaders, there has not yet been indication of much political will or leadership to address the weaknesses that prevent King Abdul Aziz University from making progress towards its strategic goals.

Opportunities

While weaknesses currently appear to outnumber KAU's strengths, there are indeed opportunities that KAU can seize in order to achieve its ambitions. There are a number of top leaders who would like to implement the strategic plan at a much faster and at a more orderly pace. They can be supported by the very large budget awarded by the Saudi Arabian government (SAR 5,964,984) in fiscal 2015 designated for implementing initiatives and completing on-going projects. Some of these projects in which HR can play a positive role include:

- Leadership training for those involved with interdisciplinary and integrated learning models for the Western region of Saudi Arabia
- Participating in partnerships with other universities, both regionally and globally, hence requiring a higher level of training and professionalism
- Enrolment growth and program expansion requiring better coordination, communication, leadership, efficiency and effectiveness from the workforce

- Expanding cultural and social activities within the university, requiring higher levels of engagement and morale among implementers and participants
- Growing awareness that something needs fixing in its organizational processes as evidenced by KAU developing human resource management expertise by awarding scholarships in graduate level human resource management programs

There are potentially great opportunities for human resource professionals to help KAU achieve its strategic goals. Whether these potentialities can be realized depend a great deal on whether there is the political will to overcome inertia generated by decades of complacence with the status quo.

Threats

Threats abound for those promoting change. "Winners" in the existing hierarchy and cultural environment have absolutely no incentive to willingly give up power and positions they currently enjoy. Opportunities to sabotage any initiative that might appear threatening to them can be easily seized with impunity. These perceived threats are unfortunately very real if KAU decides to implement the strategic plan more forcefully. Here are some reasons why:

- Opening up the university locally, regionally and globally would invite competition from other local public as well as private universities
- World-class universities usually enjoy a high degree of egalitarianism that is required for true academic freedom. KAU's authoritarian way of governance would have to become more democratic if it wants to be recognized in the world-class higher education community
- Accountability, a key measure of performance, will have to be instituted making even more employees and leaders fear the new regimen
- More importantly, Saudi culture is very tradition-based and until now has not shown itself to be flexible when meeting new ideas or challenges.
- Since job security is guaranteed, innovation and increased productivity might only happen at the high cost of hiring new employees who are more eager for professional development. Even if doable, the cost to morale would be tremendous since only part of the team would be working at capacity.
- Entrepreneurship and initiative are new and maybe even alien concepts to tradition-bound Saudi Arabian society. The degree of risk-taking by Saudi individuals is very low. Although KAU has allocated political and monetary resources to implement its goal of making KAU a center of innovation and business incubation, the obvious hurdle is a culture of respect for authority and tradition that is not supportive of this goal. In a rigidly hierarchical organization, new ideas are often lost or even abducted during their transmission through multiple layers of the organization.

It is obvious that many threats await those who want to make real changes at KAU. While threats can be paralyzing, they may be mitigated by careful, advance preparation such as engaging staff in all levels of planning before implementation.

6. Review of Best Practices

In my review of best practices I focused only on three main issues I identified from employees' responses that seem practical, given the many threats and challenges enumerated above. While the importance of quality leadership will remain the over-riding theme, I will only discuss how to apply best practices to the three main issues identified by respondents in my study.

The leadership transition process plays an essential role in an organization's well-being. It affects the organization's efficiency and effectiveness. Adams contends in Capturing the Power of Leadership Change that a leadership transition "is a pivotal moment that gives organizations the chance to re-examine their current structure, practices, and direction .[4]" KAU's strategic goal of achieving excellence requires effective leaders who can implement strategy, develop influential relationships with employees, boost performance, improve employee attitudes and behaviors and, motivate and inspire employees. KAU can't succeed in its strategic plan without a systematic leadership transition process. Leadership transition is a great opportunity for KAU to make progress towards its long-term goals. Identifying and adopting appropriate, effective and proven processes among best practices found in HR literature would ensure that effective leaders are nominated and selected to implement well-planned leadership transitions.

Tom Adams/Annie E. (2004) Casey Foundation, *Capturing the Power of Leadership Change*: Using Executive Transition Management to strengthen [4] organizational capacity. Executive Transitions Monograph Series, p.5. Retrieved from http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-CapturingThePowerOfLeadershipChange-2004-Full.pdf#page=6

1) Selection Committee

It is critical for KAU to set up official selection committees to nominate new leaders. The members of these committee and their chairs must have knowledge about organizational goals and direction, and the ability and accountability to manage effectively in order to increase its chance of success In Nonprofit Leadership Transition and Development Guide, Adams identified three key qualities that committe chair must possess: facilitation and communication skills, a deep knowledge of the mission, activities and executive roles, and sufficient time and energy" [5] Selection of committee members must be transparent and based on a set of criteria and institutional needs. Once formed, the committee must set clear criteria to evaluate leadership candidates based on whether they can fulfill curent and future organizational assignments.

According to The National Academy of Public Administration (1997) "looking ahead at the leadership competencies and positions that will be needed for the organization's future success, rather than only looking at replacement needs" is the correct emphasis. Continuing, the academy stated that "facilitating the development and career progress of highly talented and skilled individuals in the organization, using formalized procedures, resources, policies, and processes" [6] is crucial.

While experience is an important attribute for someone assuming a leadership position, experience and knowledge alone can also be a drawback for a leader facing change. According to Mukunda "Filtered leaders will usually make basically the same decisions. Even if they're good decisions, their leadership doesn't have impact" [7]. Although experience has a significant impact on leadership efficiency it can impede change and development. "There is no guarantee that the most senior employees will be the most qualified, or the best fit, for the job" [8] according to Phillips and Gully in Strategic Staffing.

Capacity is important—possessing leadership skills in their personality is essential to be successful leader. " A leader possesses many traits such as being able to drive theories into practice through high levels of motivation, the desire to lead, being honest and have integrity, maintain self-confidence, have emotional stability, demonstrate cognitive ability and possess the knowledge of the business" [9] In addition, it is important for the committee to identify candidates among high performers and high potential employees in the organization . Paese states that "Organizations can take action to promote the right leaders by assessing their transitional skills prior to promotion, painting clear pictures of what lies ahead, and getting managers (bosses) involved in the dialogue with transitioning leaders so that they can help to clarify how success should be defined [10]"

It is useful to evaluate leadership characteristics using multisource assessment (360-degree assessments) or Nine box Matrix which "evaluates both an employee's current contribution to the organization and his or her potential level of contribution to the organization" [11]. It is best to scan the entire organization for high potential leaders and employees who possess the critical skills.

Timely, public announcements of available leadership positions is critical to avoid the risk of vacancies, and to provide new leaders sufficient time to familiarize themselves with the new work place, to train, and to set goals. Employees can be provided with appropriate information about candidates that can help them to state their preferences for one of them. It would be unrealistic in Saudi Arabia to have employees elect a supervisor. Nevertheless, engaging staff in advance by soliciting input would go a long way to making the transition process a successful endeavor.

[5] Adams, T. (2010). Executive Transition Management. In *The nonprofit leadership transition and development guide proven paths for leaders and organizations* (p. 137). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass :. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com

[6] National Academy of Public Administration. (1997). Managing succession and developing leadership: Growing the next generation of public service leaders. HRM Series, III, 7. Retrieved July 19, 2007, from Business Source Premier (EBSCO).

[7] Mukunda, G. (2012). Great Leaders Don't Need Experience. Harvard Business Review, 90(10), 30-31.

[8] Phillips, J., & Gully, S. (2015). Assessing internal Candidates. In *Strategic Staffing* (p. 284). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall

[9] McGary, R. (2014). Leadership in the 21st Century. Retrieved from https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/leadership-21st-century-ron-mcgary?trk=seokp_posts_primary_cluster_res_title. From Williams, C. (2013). *MGMT: Principles of Management.* Mason, Ohio: South-Western.

[10] Paese, M., & S, R. (n.d.). Leaders in Transition: Stepping up, not off. (p.25) Retrieved from http://www.ddiworld.com/DDI/media/trend-research/leaders-in-transition-stepping-up-not-off_mis_ddi.pdf

[11] Phillips, J., & Gully, S. (2015). Assessing internal Candidates. In *Strategic Staffing* (p. (p.291). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall

2) Optimal Duration for Contract Terms

The length of a leader's contract must be sufficiently long for the new leader to identify, plan and implement departmental objectives that would support KAU's strategic goals. According to Dandira, "The service contract of executive directors needs a major revamp versus the length of the strategic plan. There should be a synchronization of the length of the strategic plan and the executive's contract of employment, and efforts should be made to make sure that executives go through the strategic plans that they contributed to the formation of for the purposes of continuity and smooth running of the organisation."[12].

3) Direction and Support from Top Management

Providing adequate support and clear guidance are key factors to successful transitions. It is vital that a transition committee and upper management welcome. guide and support a new leader. They should prepare the new leader by providing sufficient training that is followed by mentoring by a more experienced manager. Clear directions and expectations make for a less stressful and more successful transition. Chatman, and Eunyoung claim "strong cultures boost performance by shaping and coordinating employees' behavior. Stated values and norms focus employees' attention on organizational priorities that then guide their behavior and decision making"[13]. For instance, emphasizing the importance of handoff reports by departing leaders can help new leaders tremendously. An accurate hand-off report will provide valuable knowledge of the existing situation and also any future objectives that need to be addressed. In Inside CEO succession the essential guide to leadership transition, Winum and Saporito assert that "...the capture and transfer of knowledge from outgoing leader to incoming leader will be indispensable to an organization's business continuity and competitive advantage"[14]. In addition, a supervisor has to evaluate the new leader's performance on a pre-announced schedule. Paese, pointed out that "Having a network of colleagues and peers who can provide feedback, guidance, and insight is an essential element to successful ,Annual or biannual assessments are helpful methods to judge progress, to identify obstacles and challenges .[15]"transition .and to find remedies to address any performance gapsAccording to the Ten Principles of Change and Management "Effectively managing change requires continuous reassessment of its impact and the organization's willingness and ability to adopt the next wave of transformation"[16].

7. Alternative Solutions/Recommended solution

Despite the unlikelihood of adoption, KAU could do the following:

- Review and realign its authority structure to allow KAU to have more flexibility to cope with change. The rigidly authoritarian hierarchy is not compatible with values of academic freedom and innovation that typify a world-class institution of higher learning. Blind obedience to rules, regulations and procedures provide no space for creativity or entrepreneurship.
- Appoint a woman dean for its women's division. There is no reason why a stand alone women's division requires oversight by a man who isn't part of the woman's academic community. Doing so would lessen resentment; decrease conflicts and dissatisfaction, and empower women leaders to do what is best for their constituents and KAU.

[12] Dandira, M. (2011) "The impact of executive directors' service contracts on strategic plan", Business Strategy Series, Vol. 12 Iss: 1, pp.12 – 18
Retrieved from http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/full/10.1108/17515631111106830

[13] Chatman, J. A., & Eunyoung Cha, S. (2003). Leading by Leveraging Culture. *California Management Review*, *45*(4), 20-34.

[14] Saporito, T., & Winum, P. (2012). Epilogue: Perspectives on the Future. *In Inside CEO succession the essential guide to leadership transition* (p. 206). Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons.. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com

[15] Paese, M., & S, R. (n.d.). Leaders in Transition stepping up, not off.(P.26) Retrieved from http://www.ddiworld.com/DDIWorld/media/trend-research/leadershiptransitions_ang_rr_ddi.pdf?ext=.pdf

[16] Aguirre, D., & Alpern, M. (2014). 10 guiding principles for leading change management. *Industry Week*, Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/1610035582?accountid=142908

- Establish and institutionalize a thoughtful, intentional transition process that can be applied throughout the organization to increase transparency, systemization and effectiveness. Until now KAU's leadership transitions are mostly reactive instead of proactive. Favoritism and nepotism are not celebrated values of world-class universities.

- Invite input from as many employees as practicable when selecting new leaders. Whenever possible, employees should feel that they have a role, no matter how small, in their own professional journey. When invested, employees will take responsibility—ensuring success for the new leader.

- Set clear expectations, fair criteria and standards, and performance benchmarks for all employees. These can be the basis for qualifying leadership candidates as well. Criteria can be based on experience, good evaluations, leadership attributes, professional growth and stated career goals. Selection and evaluation processes should be fairly and impartially applied but most importantly, transparent. Best practices in HR require that evaluations be regularly scheduled.

- Begin a leadership transition process well in advance of an existing leader's departure. There should be sufficient time for a nomination and selection process followed by enough time to conduct a systematic, productive and collaborative handover.

- Align its contract duration for leaders with the university's strategic plan. For example, it can adopt a five-year contract that streamlines with each five-year revision of the strategic plan

- Support and mentor its new leaders by providing thorough orientation and clear guidance to new supervisors on how to establish predictable and respectful work environments. Coach new leaders on how to fairly set expectations and objectives for the employees they supervise.

- Establish a fair and predictable reward system to motivate all employees to perform effectively. Criteria, expectations and benchmarks may differ according to different levels of assignments but a transparent and consistent reward system would inspire the best and brightest employees to shine.

- Provide both monetary rewards and nonmonetary rewards to reinforce talent. Monetary rewards such as performance-based incentives will motivate employees to excel. Nonmonetary rewards such as employee recognition, job rotation and job enrichment would increase job satisfaction.

8. Risk/Benefit Analysis (legal implications)

Risks

D. Downey states that "Leadership transition has the potential to bring substantial positive change in employee contributions, employees engagement and culture change outcomes"[17] while simultaneously, the risk and cost related to transition failure can be very high[18]. Unfortunately, KAU does not currently plan for leadership transitions in a systematic way. There are no thoughtfully appointed committees to assume their share of responsibility and ultimately, accountability for the success or failure of the process. KAU delegates the responsibility of selecting vice-deans to the dean of a college, and the selection of administrative directors to vice-deans. Workloads of vice-deans do not provide much time or, in some cases, much desire for identifying his or her own successor. Inadequate work-systems and processes in leadership transition trigger several risks for KAU. The previously identified shortcomings of not having planned leadership transitions, a lack of selection criteria, the lack of a system for holding the new leader accountable, the lack of support and guidance for new leaders from top management and finally, inadequate length of appointments, all lead to the setting up of under-performing leaders, demoralized departments and exacerbation of internal conflicts. The final cost to KAU is the inability of its constituent departments to contribute meaningfully to achieving KAU's strategic goals.

The most important and impactful decision an organization can make is the selection and de-selection of its leaders. While making the right decision is crucial to institutional success, getting it wrong can trigger a series of unintended and bad consequences. Top management at KAU currently makes leadership selection based on familiarity, personal relationships and tribal alliances. According to Phillips and Gully in Strategic Staffing "many companies do internal staffing very poorly. Because employees are "known", their manager and organization often mistakenly assume the employees do not need to be systematically and deliberately assessed"[19].

Boal, K.B. and Hooijberg, R. (2001), "Strategic leadership research: moving on", Leadership Quarterly, Vol. 11 No. 4, pp. 515-549[17]

Downey, D. (2002). HR's role in assimilating new leaders. *Employment Relations Today, 28*(4), 69-83. Retrieved from [18] http://search.proquest.com/docview/237064550?accountid=142908

Phillips, J., & Gully, S. (2015). Assessing internal Candidates. *In Strategic Staffing*.(p. 282) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall[19]

According to Adams In <u>The nonprofit leadership transition and development guide proven paths for leaders and organizations,</u> "Too often the rush to hire or a lack of appreciation by the board of the challenges that comes from transition result in treating the executive transition like one more hiring process. This approach misses the opportunity to take stock and strengthen and in some case transform the organization"[20]. I found some colleges at KAU remain leaderless for up to six months at a time, which is also damaging to the organization. Sloan claims "Internal leadership transition is a challenge for any organization. The loss of an executive director or other high level leader can disrupt the normal functioning of an organization, resulting in at least a temporary loss of direction, reduced productivity and effectiveness, and lower employee morale". [21] Internal conflicts between top management and incompetent hires negatively impact employees' performances and operational efficiency. KAU's ad hoc handling of transitions results in poorly matched placements and indifferent and ineffective leaders who subvert the institutional effort to achieve excellence. According to Nadler and Tushman "Conflict in organizations is often avoided and suppressed because of its negative consequences and to seek to preserve consistency, stability and harmony within the organization"[22]. In KAU's case, it fails to recognize the linkage between the organization's poor handling of transitions and its linkage to its inability to achieve strategic goals.

Another risk is that KAU has are its short-term employee contracts. Current leadership contracts at KAU are much shorter than the duration of its strategic plan (five years). Changing leaders every year or two years have negatively impacted a department's ability to identify and implement its portion of the strategic plan. A short-term commitment by KAU to its leaders does not motivate new leaders to take on longer-term projects required by the strategic plan. The fear of leaving a project unfinished is a potent dis-incentive to start one. Dandira says that "Shareholders' approval is optional and does not take into account the length of a strategic plan crafted by the leaving CEO, and this has caused a lot of strategic failures"[23]. While I found that some current vice deans were familiar with the KAU's strategic goals, they lack adequate authority to start projects which might take their entire contract term to be approved in its transmittal through multiple hierarchical layers. The same situation exists with administrative directors whose employees report that directors also know their role in the strategic plan but lack authority, time or incentives to do so. In addition, new leaders are unenthusiastic about completing projects of a previous director and start their own project. This discontinuity undermines the premise of a strategic plan. In <u>The nonprofit leadership transition and development guide proven paths for leaders and organizations</u>, Tom Adams insists that " without involvement and consistent, clear communication, board staff, and stakeholders become concerned and stories get created about what is going on"[24]. Without support, a consistent, predictable system of rewarding excellence and facilitation, even talented leaders will be more likely be discouraged, disengaged, not seek to develop and change themselves, or leave the organization entirely.

According to Tom Adams in <u>The nonprofit leadership transition and development guide proven paths for leaders and organizations,</u> "The biggest risk for organization in transition is to ignore the basic facts about what is going on. These irrefutable facts will influence the transition whether attended to or not"[25]. When a new leader discounts or ignores a hand-off report by the departing leader, he or she is costing KAU organizational time, effort and even money. Moreover, this disregard for departmental history is detrimental to the transition process.

Benefits:

A rational leadership transition plan can avoid significant operational and strategic risks. When transitions are systematized, it can avoid problems that negatively impact productivity, effectiveness, morale and accountability. A well-planned transition can help by:

[20] Adams, T. (2010). Executive Transition Management. In *The nonprofit leadership transition and development guide proven paths for leaders and organizations* (p. 125). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass :. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com

[21] Sloan, M. (2006). Leadership Transition and Succession Planning.(p.1)

[22] Nadler, D.A. and Tushman, M.L. (1999), "The organization of the future: strategic imperative and core competencies for the 21st century", Organizational Dynamics, Vol. 28 No. 1, pp. 16-45

[23] Dandira, M. (2011). The impact of executive directors' service contracts on strategic plan. *Business Strategy Series, 12*(1), 12-18. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/17515631111106830

[24] Adams, T. (2010). Executive Transition Management. In *The nonprofit leadership transition and development guide proven paths for leaders and organizations.*(p.138) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass :. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com

[25] Adams, T. (2010). The Leader's Way. *In The nonprofit leadership transition and development guide proven paths for leaders and organizations*. San Francisco (p. 134). Jossey-Bass:. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com

- Increasing employee perceptions of the procedure's fairness by reducing opportunities for favoritism. Nepotism would then be discouraged among managers and supervisors.
- Improving talent retention, attracting talent and creating pools of candidates with high leadership potential.
- Improving communication and alignment to prevent vacancies or missed opportunities hence, minimizing the risk of a critical position remaining vacant after the departure of an incumbent.
- Monitoring overall progress of department towards achieving strategic goals
- Increasing the ability to achieve its strategic goals by nurturing a more satisfied, engaged and empowered team of stakeholders.

9. Expected Outcomes

I expect that any leadership transition plan I suggest would be rejected outright or if considered, will take a very long time to be accepted and implemented. At worst, I might be relegated by superiors to a dead end position where I will languish, for daring to find fault with the establishment.

Some reasons for rejection are:

1. Top management might reject the plan because they do not perceive the problem and might consider my proposal as a non-urgent matter or even a waste of time. Ciampa and Dotlich contend, "Most boards in my experience don't have … the capability or the insight or the experience to oversee a succession process and, in general, don't spend enough time thinking through what their role should be."[26] Additionally, personal attitudes, an entrenched power structure, legacy and ego might cause complacency, hesitation and reluctance to introduce new processes or even to recognize how important this issue is. They do not see the linkage between poor leadership transitions to the success of KAU's strategic plan.

2. All deans and top management are men. They have ultimate control of women's departments and their leadership. It is unlikely that a woman's proposal, no matter how studied or sound, would receive serious consideration. According to Winum and Saporito in Inside CEO succession the essential guide to leadership transition "The disconnect between how important this issue is and the willingness of boards to tackle it can be attributed to the fact that it is a time-consuming process and many board members are ill-prepared to manage it. Moreover, the psychological forces and organizational dynamics involving such issues as power, ego, legacy, and personal agendas have as much influence on the process as objective data, procedures, and timelines"[27].

3. Nepotism is rampant and tolerated. It is strongly embedded in the Saudi culture of patronization and tribal or familial obligations. New effective leaders would threaten the personally rewarding status quo. A majority would prefer to choose leaders who are indebted to their patron without regard for ability or suitability to meet the institution's current and future needs.

Even if adopted, my proposal would have to contend with numerous challenges: KAU is a public institution with numerous hierarchical levels and the resulting wider spans of control. A multiplicity of rules, regulations, policies and procedures proliferate. A leadership transition plan might get lost or distorted in transmission through the numerous organizational levels headed by individuals with different agendas. This rigid organizational structure restricts the speed at which change can occur and any imposed plan can be easily subverted along its tortuous path through the hierarchy. A Human Resources Department has a critical stewardship role in managing leadership transitions. Unfortunately, there is no Human Resource Department at KAU. Instead we have a Personnel Department that is only responsible for payroll and recordkeeping. Without a HR infrastructure, it would be near impossible for one individual or a small group of HR professionals to establish an effective leadership transition regimen, even with the blessing of top management.

[26] Meinert, D. (2015, January 9). How HR Can Help Ensure a Successful CEO Transition. HR Magazine. Retrieved from http://www.shrm.org/publications/hrmagazine/editorialcontent/2015/0915/pages/0915-execbrief.aspx.

From Dan Ciampa and David L. Dotlich, Transitions at the Top: What Organizations Must Do to Make Sure New Leaders Succeed, 2015

[27] Saporito, T., & Winum, P. (2012). Why CEO Succession Is More Critical than Ever. In Inside CEO succession the essential guide to leadership transition (p. 5). Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com

10. Address Concerns

KAU has to realize that a leadership transition plan is much more than an important procedure. It is fundamental to an organization's sustained success. Winum and Saporito in Inside CEO succession the essential guide to leadership transition asserts that planning and adopting a leadership transition plan can enable an organization to "envision new opportunities for growth" and "enliven and unite employees with new hope and greater confidence"[28] It also helps organization to perform proactive actions rather than make reactive responses, hence, decreasing the risk of choosing wrong leaders. A leadership transition plan is a remedial action that addresses many issues and problems that currently hinder its development and growth. Tom Adams in Nonprofit Leadership Transition and Development Guide: Proven Paths for Leaders and Organizations says, "If an organization can't clarify its direction and priorities, and if it does not identify the key transition issues the chance of successful search are remote"[29]. This is also true of KAU's prospects for the achievement of its strategic goals. In Inside CEO Succession The Essential Guide to Leadership Transition, Winum and Saporito contend "The single most important issue underlying CEO failure and, consequentially, company failure, is an inadequate or poorly executed CEO succession plan that either put the wrong leader in the top position for the wrong reasons or did not attend to the necessary integration issues that should precede and follow the most important transitional event in a company's life"[30]

When applying best practices to KAU's leadership transition procedure, it is really a way to enhance organizational growth and promote success. Relegating such an important task as leadership transition to one or two leaders is risking institutional failure. Winum, Paul, and Saporito In Inside CEO Succession: The Essential Guide to Leadership Transition claim, " many companies have strengthened their CEO succession plans and processes to keep pace with the changing business landscape. They have made succession a business priority and found ways to contend with the undercurrent of powerful psychological forces embedded in the process. These companies have succeeded in transitioning their top leaders and have grown their enterprises as a result"[31]. Current power brokers may be enticed by ego-boosting incentives into contributing positively to the process. For example, a current dean might chair a selection committee, perhaps in name only, but nevertheless receive recognition by higher ups.

Nepotism, another concern, might be discouraged if the selection team is held accountable for the success or failure of an appointment. "While it may be tempting to hire someone who is just like, or the opposite of, the departing leader"[32] according to Mack, these practices are not in the organization's interest. When the success or failure of a new leader is attributable to a group, the group is incentivized to guard its integrity.

A rigid hierarchy, reflecting the native societal norm, is indeed difficult to alter. Any attempt to change it would incite great hostility among establishment types. Nevertheless, an attempt must be made to sell change by pointing out that in order to achieve strategic goals and hence, bring greater prestige to stakeholders, the existing hierarchical structure is standing in the way. On the other hand, a lack of progress towards attaining goals by successive strategic plans would reflect very poorly on the current leadership. Moreover, KAU is aware that too many rules have already reduced the flexibility of action, motivation, creativity and development. Jennifer and Chatman asserts that, "depending on formal rules, policies, and procedures will not result in outstanding anything be it innovation, or quality. More rules frustrate employees' willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty"[33]. There might be more tolerance for decentralization of authority and a better flow of information to appropriate parties than I realize.

Saporito, T., & Winum, P. (2012). Why CEO Succession Is More Critical than Ever. In Inside CEO succession the essential guide to leadership [28] transition (p. 20). Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com

Adams, T. (2010). Executive Transition Management. In The nonprofit leadership transition and development guide proven paths for leaders and [29] organizations (p. 132). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass :.Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com/

Saporito, T., & Winum, P. (2012). Why CEO Succession Is More Critical than Ever. In Inside CEO succession the essential guide to leadership [30] transition (p. 24). Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com

Saporito, T., & Winum, P. (2012). Why CEO Succession Is More Critical than Ever. In Inside CEO succession the essential guide to [31] leadership transition (p. 20). Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com
. Retrieved from http://www.ebrary.com

Mack, J. (2013). Organizational Dynamics of Leadership Transitions. Retrieved from [32]
https://fsaleadershipresourcecenter.wordpress.com/2013/12/23/transitioning-in-a-new-leader-2/

Chatman, J. A., & Eunyoung Cha, S. (2003). Leading by Leveraging Culture. California Management Review, 45(4), 20-34. [33]

Many departments at KAU conduct HR functions including among others, the office of Administrative Development Management, Personnel Department and the Office of the Vice-dean of the girl's campus. The suggestion of decreased responsibility in the various departments because of the consolidation of human resources functions would be threatening to those currently charged with the tasks. Care would have to be taken to explain the benefits of such a move, e.g. freeing resources to be devoted to enhancing the departments' key missions. Because of the cultural environment, it never hurts to point out how much more status would be accorded to their increased success because they have more time to apply to the task. Finally, There are no rewards, monetarily or prestige-wise, for being on a selection committee. KAU already provide stipends for participating in a majority of committees. Adding a stipend might engender more interest and devotion to the task.

"Simply acknowledging that leadership transitions represent a far more significant career event than may have been recognized in the past is a start. But taking action to educate, communicate, and provide training, coaching, and guidance to those struggling with leadership transitions can clearly make a dramatic impact on the success rates of newly promoted leaders, and can help to build the more stable leadership pipeline that organizations need to enable competitive advantage"[34.] It is time for KAU to act to repair the damage caused by placing non- or under-performing leaders in key positions.

11. Costs/Budget/ROI

A stated goal in KAU's strategic plan is the "Optimal investment of university resources and capabilities". To succeed, KAU have to focus on its talent distribution in order to allocate this important resource to key positions appropriately and optimally. I will now apply the ROI of a well-thought out leadership transition plan.

KAU, a non-profit public university, depends entirely on government funding and is very conservative, guarded and cautious financially. It was near impossible to get detailed financial information as a researcher. Hence, I will focus on indirect measure or indirect ROI, that although are not easily assigned a monetary value, are critical to KAU's overall success. To Phillips and Schmidt in The Leadership Scorecard, the definition of intangible assets is " key to competitive advantage in the knowledge era and are invisible, difficult to quantify, and not tracked through traditional accounting practices"[35]

Adhering to best practices when executing a leadership transition will promote success and hence, justify the costs associated with transitions. Reciprocally, a bad transition wastes time, energy and cause poor productivity in addition to the recruitment cost. A successful leadership transition could lead to a new level of energy and enthusiasm for positive change and widened perspectives. A new positively energized leader would inspire and motivate a rejuvenated work team. "The greatest return on investment comes from achieving organization objectives successfully with an effective leader"[36.] Other non-tangible benefits include greater organizational commitment among employees in terms of identifying organizational goals, mission, philosophy, value, policies and practices, resulting in greater job satisfaction—one tangible value that can be monetized because it is correlated with greater productivity. Shenkman and Gorbaty state, "We believe that the greatest ROI is found in the differences that leaders – and only leaders – can bring to a company or organization, but there is not yet a hard and fast formula for quantifying it"[37.] A well-appointed leader is invaluable.

A successful, well-executed transition can limit the softer costs incurred during downtime by providing an effective leader "who can hit the ground running". The recommendation that contract times be appropriate is another way of spreading the cost of recruitment and selection. Allowing input by employees allow them to be invested in the leader's success, again avoiding the costs of more transitions and reducing the number of complaints and turnover which can be detrimental to

[34] Paese, M., & S, R. (n.d.). Leaders in Transition stepping up, not off. (p.25) Retrieved from http://www.ddiworld.com/DDIWorld/media/trendresearch/leadershiptransitions_ang_rr_ddi.pdf?ext=.pdf

[35] Phillips, J., & Schmidt, L. (2004). Identifying the Intangible Benefits. *In The leadership scorecard* (p. 208). Burlington, MA: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann. Retrieved from http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780750677646500127

[36] Alimo-Metcalfe, B. and Alban-Metcalfe, J. (2006), "More (good) leaders for the public sector", International Journal of Public Sector Management, Vol. 19 No. 4, pp. 293-315

[37] Shenkman, M., & Gorbaty, B. (2007). Your highest-yielding (under-capitalized) asset: The ROI of leadership. *Business Strategy Series*, 277-282. : Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/17515630710684321

productivity. In summary, the ROI for the extra time and effort invested in a successful transition is far cheaper than the cost of a poor choice of leader who can cause untold damage to morale, productivity, opportunity and progress.

12. Implementation Plan

As a woman, I will already have my propriety and qualifications questioned. As a new graduate returning to a mid-level management position at KAU, I might not have a chance to talk to anyone beyond the women's division. Hence, the first step in my implementation plan is to identify any allies within the women's division power structure, a political task. Concurrently, I will also have to chart a careful pathway through the cultural minefield of Saudi Arabia as a woman professional. I must do this with the utmost diplomacy and finesse and strengthen my resiliency. Even if I am extraordinarily adroit, my accomplishments will be modest and perhaps only in the women's division. Nevertheless, for the sake of discussion, I will outline some steps to implement a leadership transition procedure:

1. Convince upper management at KAU that without strong leaders at all levels, the achievement of KAU's strategic goals is distant at best and probably uncertain without change.
2. Identify allies among top leaders who are ambitious and who can be enticed by the rewards that accrue to those who will be known as the achievers of the strategic plan.
3. If finances permit, establish a human resources team to research and write a leadership transition plan based on best practices that can be approved and implemented.
4. Obtain necessary approvals and directives from key members of top management to sanction and mandate the activity.
5. Assemble a demonstration selection and oversight committee based on the proposed plan to implement a leadership transition.
6. Follow the plan in its entirety with careful attention to details and outcomes (both short-term and longer-term).
7. Provide regular and timely progress reports to upper management.
8. Remain observant and flexible throughout the trial run so that adjustments might be made where needed in order to avoid obstructing operations within the target department.

This process should start at least nine to ten months before an outgoing leader's contract ends. This should allow sufficient time for recruitment, orientation and handover. The entire process could take up to a year to effect a successful changeover. This first selection-oversight committee should serve beyond the changeover to support, evaluate and refine their strategy. If successful, the leadership transition procedure can be repeated and fine-tuned or adjusted for special circumstances in various departments. Finally, when a set of common procedures is identified, KAU can institutionalize the leadership transition process so that there is uniformity throughout KAU with only minor variations.

13. Resources

Generous funding by the Saudi government will provide adequate monetary resources for accomplishing the task of organizational change. While culture has hampered other change initiatives, culture would be a great tool if it can be positively harnessed. At the minimum, knowing where the cultural roadblocks are will help change agents plan around them. An important resource that is being currently neglected is the pool of idealistic, well-educated and forward-thinking graduates like myself returning home to help our country. Their energy can be gathered to transform the institution by a new generation of top leaders also returning from abroad. Since there was relatively less resistance to information technology, KAU has acquired powerful hardware and software that can provide detailed education, skills and experience data on most of its employees for the newly constituted human resource management team. There are plentiful assessments tools that might be amenable to adaptation for use in Saudi Arabia by native-born but western-trained psychologists. If there is political will, KAU is well equipped for organizational change.

14. Next Steps

Because Saudi Arabia is basically a traditional society aspiring to transform its institutions to meet new challenges presented by a globalized world, change would probably come in stops and starts. Like many scholars of the Middle East have suggested, in order to affect long lasting transformations, the idea of "evolution" is more suitable than the idea of revolutionary change. I have no illusions that because I will have a graduate degree in Human Resources Management, I will be able to put things right for KAU. This transformation may or may not occur, with or without my help, but I am quite confident that it will take a generational change. Hence, in order for me to make a real contribution to my country, I have to keep current on professional literature that increases my knowledge base and reintegrate myself into the Saudi Arabian organizational environment. Only by thoughtful and non-judgmental study and observation will I be able to contribute to bettering KAU's chances of success and adding to the study of how culture helps or diminish hopes for improving the Saudi work environment for women.

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"التحولات القيادية وتأثيرها على التخطيط الإستراتيجي"

إعداد الباحثة:

إيمان ترسن تركستاني

الملخص:

يؤكد دوتليش وتشيامبا أن "العمل هو سباق تتابع لا ينتهي أبدًا. من بين جميع التحولات الهامة التي يجب أن تواجهها المنظمة، بشكل متكرر وبمرور الوقت، ربما يكون أصعبها هو تمرير العصا من قائد إلى آخر. يجب على المنظمة إضفاء الطابع المؤسسي على خطة انتقال قيادتها وتحسينها باستمرار من أجل التفوق. ركز البحث على الدور الذي يمكن أن تلعبه الموارد البشرية لتحسين التحولات القيادية في جامعة الملك عبد العزيز من خلال معرفة كيف يختبر أصحاب المصلحة "في الخطوط الأمامية"، أي الإدارة الوسطى وموظفيهم، التغييرات التنظيمية الحالية. قادتني النتائج التي توصلت إليها إلى الملاحظات التالية: 1) القيادة الفعالة تعتبر التحولات مهمة لقدرة المنظمة على تحقيق الأهداف الإستراتيجية، ويمكن تعميمها على الثقافة والمنظمات السعودية 2) تسبب التحولات الإشكالية نفس أنواع المشاكل لأصحاب المصلحة من الموظفين عبر الثقافات 3) يمكن أن تكون العوامل الثقافية عقبة كبيرة أمام النجاح التنظيمي. توفر الدراسة بعض الأفكار الأولية حول الدور الذي تلعبه الثقافة في تحديد جدوى تطبيق "أفضل الممارسات" في إدارة الموارد البشرية. لقد قدمت بعض التوصيات التي رأيتها ذات جدارة وإمكانية جيدة لتوفير بعض التحسينات لعمليات الانتقال المختلة الحالية في جامعة الملك عبد العزيز.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التخطيط الاستراتيجي؛ التحولات القيادية؛ تعليم عالى؛ نمذجةSWOT .