Empowering Leaders of Online Education

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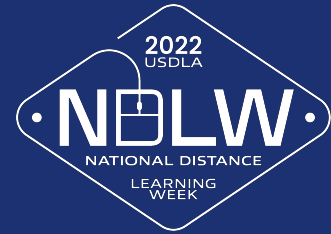
Overview

▶ COEOs drive quality in OL program administration

▶ We need to empower our COEOs

▶ What exactly is empowerment?

▶ How do we measure empowerment?

▶ What can you do to empower your COEO?

The Chief Online Education Officer (COEO) Role in the U.S.

▶ the OL higher ed market continues to grow

▶ quality sets OL programs apart in the current competitive market

▶ presidents/chancellors & provosts at many U.S. higher education institutions have been placing the quality of OL program administration under the purview of a new role known under the umbrella term of COEO

Image by macrovector on Freepik

The literature refers to the COEO-type role as (1):

▶ online learning leader

▶ chief online officer

▶ chief online learning officer

▶ chief online education officer

In the higher education arena, those who identify as COEOs hold
a variety of unique titles (2), such as:

▶ Coordinator of Distance Learning

▶ Director of Distance Education

▶ Dean of Distance and Continuing Education

▶ Director of E-Learning

▶ Director of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning

▶ Dean of Online Learning

▶ Assistant/Associate Vice President for Distance Education

Image by Freepik

1.Fredericksen, 2017, 2018; Herron et al., 2016; Legon & Garrett, 2017; 2018; Legon, Garrett, & Fredericksen, 2019
2.Fredericksen, 2017; Legon & Garrett, 2017; Nworie, 2012, p. 3

Why do we need COEOs?

Presidents/chancellors and provosts created the COEO role to:

▶ direct organizational innovation of strategic importance

▶ absorb all duties associated with online education, including:

- mission
- accreditation
- course scheduling
- quality assurance
- curriculum
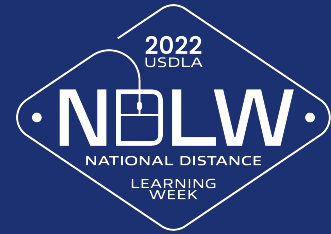- technology
- faculty needs
- resources (1)

The COEO

▶ functions "beyond middle management, offering an institution-wide strategic vision as part of senior academic leadership" (2)

▶ sits "at the center of the issues and influences that determine present and future [online education] policy" (3)

Image by rawpixel.com on Freepik

1. Herron et al., 2016; Fredericksen, 2017; Legon & Garrett, 2017
2. Herron et al., 2016, p. 1
3. Legon & Garrett, 2017, p. 8

Degree to which OL Programs Are Important to the Institution	Complexity Level	Differentiation Level*	# Reporting Units	Integration Level**	Title Hierarchy Level	Desired Quality Levels	Legitimate Power Levels
High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Mid	Mid	Mid	Mid	Mid	Mid	Mid	Mid
Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low

2022
USDLA
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NATIONAL DISTANCE
LEARNING
WEEK

Part II: We need to empower our COEOs

Recapping Dr. Tony Pina's Common Mistakes in Leading Online Education

▶ Error 1: We engage in offering online programs for increased enrollment/revenue.

▶ Error 2: We confuse :

- increasing options/decreasing barriers for *existing* students

- with educating *new* students outside traditional boundaries.

▶ Error 3: We make it all about online courses, where online learners are often 2nd class citizens.

▶ Error 4: We add online to a decentralized structure, marginalizing online ed.

▶ Error 5: We use existing policies and procedures for online.

▶ Error 6: We equate online course design with online teaching.

▶ Error 7: We expect faculty to be experts in online education.

What environmental factors shape the COEO role?

Existing literature (1) mentions environmental factors that shape the COEO role at each unique higher education institution, including:

▶ job title

▶ reporting line

▶ reporting units

▶ length of the role at the institution

▶ length of time as COEO at the current institution

▶ type and length experience

▶ portfolio of responsibilities

▶ leadership responsibilities

1.Fredericksen, 2017; 2018

Human Motivation

People are motivated by a combination of three things…

Affiliation

Achievement

Power

Decisions and behaviors will be driven by one of the three…

McClelland, D.C. (2009) *Human Motivation*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press

Which motivation makes the worst type of leader…?

POWER

Which motivation makes the best type of leader…?

POWER!!!

How does that work…?

Yukl, G. (2006) *Leadership in Organizations [6th ed]*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson-Prentice Hall (p. 193-196)

Affiliation/Achievement Orientation

- Affiliation
  - Avoids confrontation
  - Struggles making difficult decisions

- Achievement
  - High level desired, but shouldn't be the driving factor
  - "Look what *I* did" instead of "Look what *we* did"
  - Struggle sharing success
  - May step on others to gain achievement

Yukl, G. (2006) *Leadership in Organizations [6th ed]*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson-Prentice Hall (p. 193-196)

Power Orientations

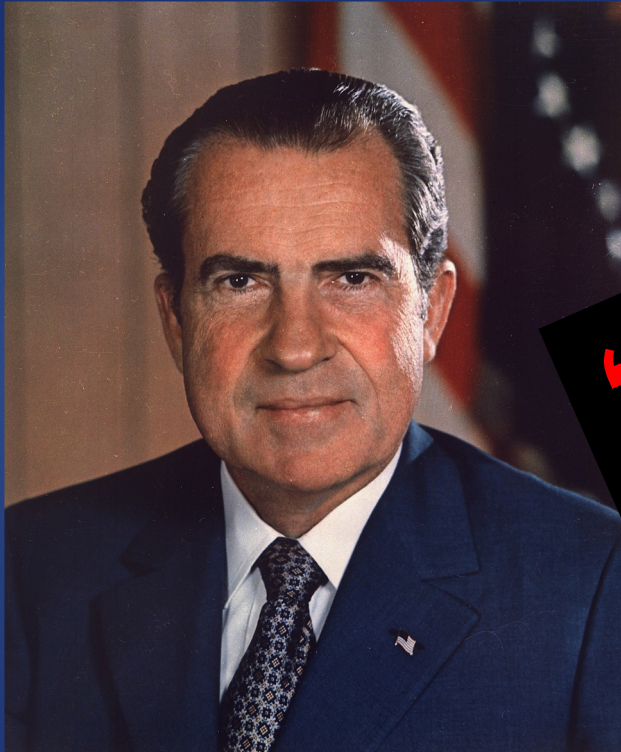- Personalized Power Orientation

    - Uses power to manipulate or subvert others

    - Main goal is personal gain or preservation

- Socialized Power Orientation

    - Uses power to develop or help others

    - Tends to lean towards empowerment and participative leadership

Yukl, G. (2006) *Leadership in Organizations [6th ed]*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson-Prentice Hall (p. 193-196)

The Warning...

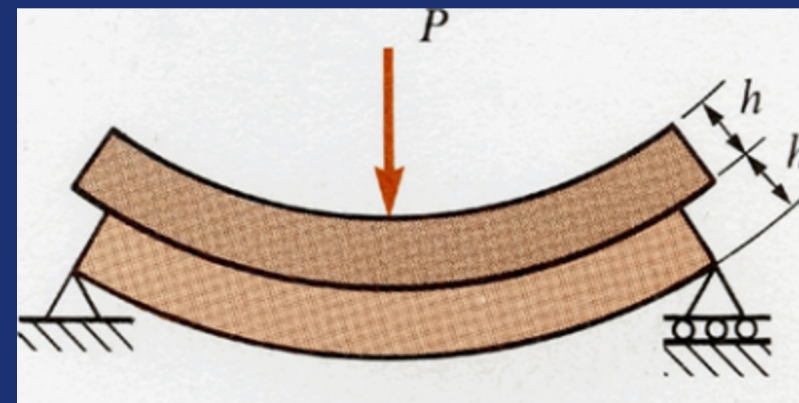Personalized Power Orientation

Socialized Power Orientation

"Do you know who I am!?"

How do we counter the switch…?

- Integrity
    - The more power you get, the more tempting it is to use it for yourself
    - Don't break when stress is applied

- Accountability
    - Diversity
    - Avoid "Yes men"
    - Surround yourself with people that will challenge you and call you out when you're wrong

What are Power and Influence?

Note- The definition of power is important!

- Power- the potential or ability to <u>influence</u> or <u>counter the influence</u> of others

- <u>Influence</u>- affecting a change in attitude, behavior, or situation

- Leadership= <u>Influence</u> + Group + Goal

French and Raven as a place to start…

- French and Raven
  - Position Power
    - Legitimate
    - Reward
    - Coercive
    - Information
  - Personal Power
    - Expert
    - Referent

- Other Powers
  - Ecological
  - Network/Connection
  - Physical
  - Financial

Two issues…
- Difficult to measure

- Applicability

"EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON WHICH YOU CAN USE TO CHANGE THE WORLD."
NELSON MANDELA

Yukl, G. (2006) *Leadership in Organizations [6th ed]*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson-Prentice Hall (p. 148-158)
Bass, B.M., Bass, R. (2008) *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications [4th ed]*.
   New York, NY: Free Press (p. 271)
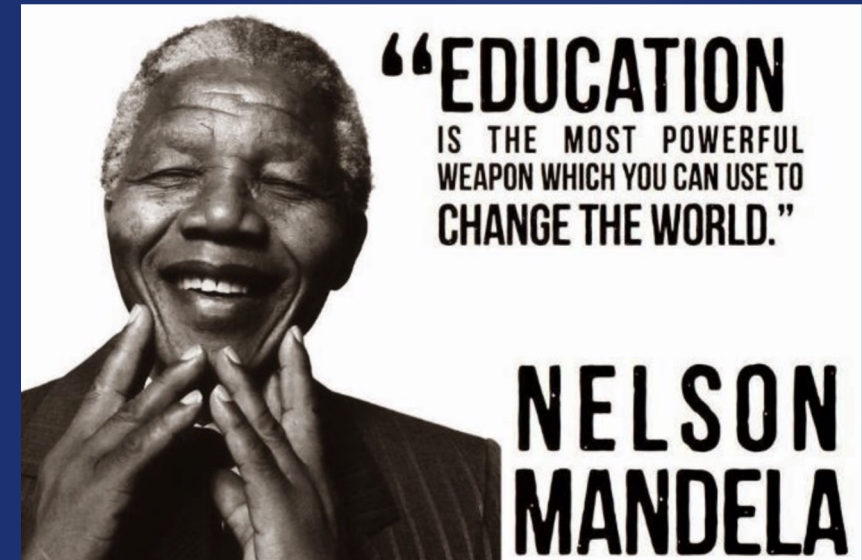
Legitimate Power

- Rank
- Age
- Title
- Gender
- Citizenship
- Legal Status
- Being First

Reward Power

- The ability to create rewards

- The ability to distribute rewards

- The ability to choose rewards

Coercive Power

- The ability to punish or harm

    - Formal Reports

    - Docking Pay

    - Physical Punishment

    - Withholding

Information Power

- Access to Information

- Control over information

Expert Power

- Education/Training/Certifications

- Experience/Skills

Referent Power

- Admiration

- Trust

- Inspiration

- Respect

Ecological Power

- Control over the environment

- Control over the atmosphere

Network/Connection Power

- Access to the power of others

- Quality & Quantity

Physical Power

- Appearance

- Presence

- Manipulation

Financial Power

- Cash/Credit/Barter/Favors
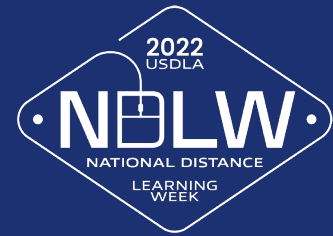
- Power Versatility

Power is Situational

- Just because power is applicable in one situation does not mean that it is applicable in all situations

Legitimate Power

- Telling an Airman to do something because you are a Major

- Telling a customer service representative at Wal-Mart to do something because you are a Major

Power is Cultural

- The culture of a group can be defined as the **accumulated shared learning** of that group as it **solves its problems** of external adaptation and internal integration; which has **worked well enough to be considered valid** and, therefore, to be **taught to new members** as the correct way to perceive, think, feel, and behave in relation to those problems.

- What culture is prominent?

  - Cultural Adaptation- You adapt to their culture

  - Cultural Minimization- Your culture needs to supersede the cultural expectations of others

  - Cultural Integration- A compromise is best and worth the effort

Schein, E.H. (2017). *Organizational Culture and Leadership [5th ed.].* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. p. 6
Caligiuri, P. (2012). *Cultural Agility: Building a Pipeline of Successful Global Professionals.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. pp. 6-7

Types of Power Worth Sharing

- Legitimate
- Reward
- Coercive
- Expert
- Referent
- Information
- Ecological
- Network/Connection
- Physical
- Financial

What is Power Distance?

- The degree to which members of a group expect and agree that power should be shared unequally

- The Power Difference is the perceived difference in power between two individuals within a given situation and culture

Hofstede, G., Hofstede G.J., Minkov, M. (2010) *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind [3rd ed]*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill (p. 53-88)
Schein, E.H. (2017) *Organizational Culture and Leadership [5th ed]*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons (p. 84)

What does Power Difference feel like...?

What does Power Distance look like…?

Low Power Distance

Open Communication
Innovation/Creativity

Risk Taking

Flat Organizational Structure

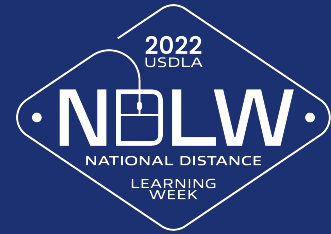**High Power Distance**

Structured Communication
Standardization

Risk Avoidance

Tall Organizational Structure

Hofstede, G., Hofstede G.J., Minkov, M. (2010) *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind [3rd ed]*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill (p. 53-88)

Part V: What can you do to empower your COEO?

Empowering COEOs

- ▶ Strategic importance of OL for the institution

- ▶ COEO's job title

- ▶ Position in the institutional hierarchy

- ▶ Access to provost, president, chancellor, and peer C-suite members

- ▶ Influence in all aspects of OL strategy/operations

- ▶ Portfolio

- ▶ Budget

- ▶ Promote research for, by, and about COEOs by creating a national home base for COEOs (1)

- • mission
- • accreditation
- • course scheduling
- • quality assurance
- • curriculum
- • ed technology
- • faculty dev
- • vendor relations
- • resources

(1) Laws, G. (2021). Powerful or powerless? Chief online education officers' legitimate power over online program quality in U.S. higher education institutions. Online Learning, 25(2), 120-139. https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v25i2.2101

Bonus Slides: Dr. Neal's
Power Distance Measurement Tool

Power Difference

▶ The Power Difference should be representative of the Power Distance

▶ The Power Difference can be used to shift the Power Distance

Managing the Power Gap

- To Decrease Power Distance
  - Empowerment- Giving power from one person to another
    - (this may or may not include the responsibility)
  - Power Mitigation- Removing or minimizing power from a situation

- To Increase Power Distance, simply retain or use your power!

Mismatched Power Distance

▶ Power Gap set too high
  ▶ Frustration/Irritation
  ▶ Trapped feeling
  ▶ Micromanaged
  ▶ Giving up

▶ Power Gap set too low
  ▶ Confusion
  ▶ Lack of Direction
  ▶ Anxiety
  ▶ Avoidance
  ▶ *Personalized Power Oriented Subordinates

How is this applied?

▶ Power Gap set too low

▶ Power Gap set too high

Confusion

Lack of Direction

Anxiety

Avoidance

Frustration/Irritation

Trapped feeling

Micromanaged

Giving up

Low Power Distance-

Open Communication

Innovation/Creativity

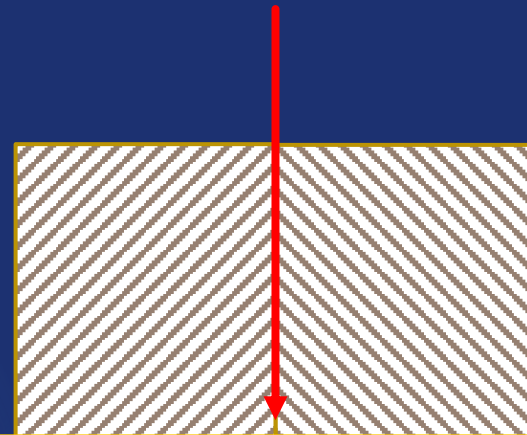Risk Taking

Flat Organizational Structure

High Power Distance-

Structured Communication

Standardization

Risk Avoidance

Tall Organizational Structure

Considerations for Understanding Power

1) Based on organizational needs, what power distance do you set?

2) What forms of power do you hold?

3) What forms of power do your followers hold?

4) How do they apply to the situation and culture?

5) How do you empower your people?

6) What power do you mitigate?

7) What power do you use?

8) Based on the behaviors of individuals in the organization, what power distance is actually set?

9) If mismatched behaviors are present, what did you miss?

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