

Leaders on Leadership

A Witt/Kieffer Collection

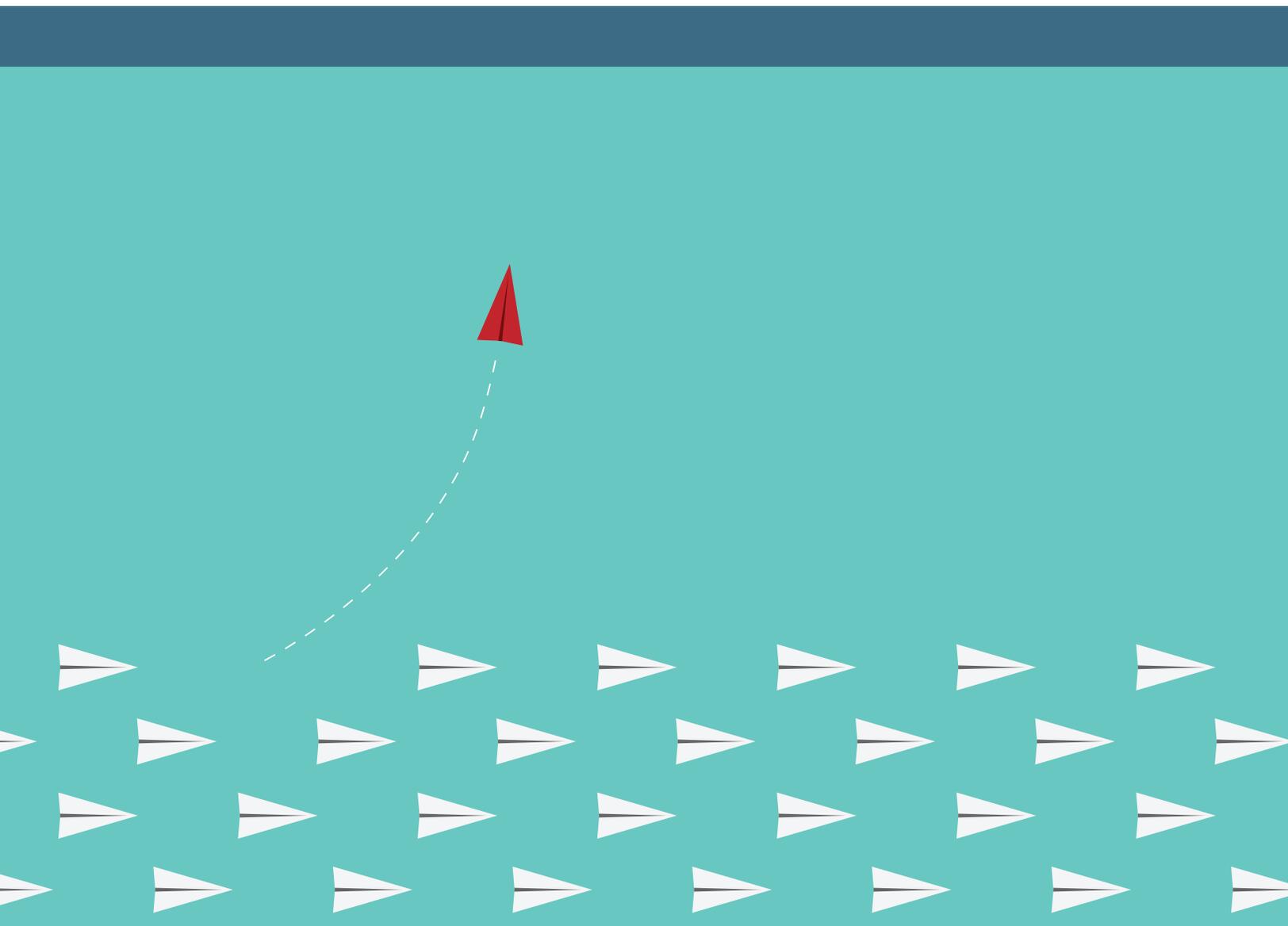


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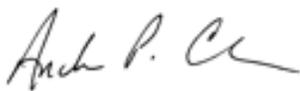
Introduction

What makes a leader?

Is it nature, nurture, or both? Can leadership skills be honed with deliberate and conscious effort or are they sparked and shaped by the right conditions, wise mentors, or dramatic career events?

At Witt/Kieffer, we are always curious about what goes into making leaders in the industries we serve. The following collection features profiles of executives we have helped place at client institutions in the past few years, zeroing in on their influences and recipes for success in leadership. Executives featured include men and women of differing backgrounds spanning education, academic medicine, healthcare, and the non-profit realm. Jabbar Bennett and Javier Cevallos consider how leaders can best foster ideals of diversity and inclusion. David Harlan and Reggie Pearson reflect on how their military pasts made deep imprints upon their leadership styles. Amy Backus and Karla Hughes reflect upon how women ascend to top roles and face barriers along the way. Bill Moore and Dave Power shed light on how corporate experience shapes their lives as non-profit executives. David Cook discusses adapting to a position abroad. Every leader has a story worth knowing, and we are happy to share these stories with you.

Sincerely,



Andrew Chastain
CEO

Amy Backus



Director of Athletics and Chair of
Physical Education,
Case Western Reserve University



Find your greatest attributes
and run with them.

- Amy Backus



*Witt/Kieffer is proud to have served
Case Western Reserve University in the
recruitment of its athletic director.*

Exemplifying Success in College Sports Leadership

Amy Backus has always been driven to succeed, from her days as a high school basketball star in Vermilion, Ohio, to life as a model student-athlete at Central Michigan University, to coaching at the college level, and to her current role overseeing athletics at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. At each stop she has strived for personal achievement, institutional success, and especially to make a difference in the lives of others. She has worked extensively with faculty groups, student life committees (addressing issues such as drinking and sexual misconduct on campus), and on women's initiatives. She has participated in important and distinguished governing bodies. In her previous role as senior associate athletic director at Yale University, Backus served as national chair of the NCAA Women's Basketball Rules Committee. Currently she is a member of the NCAA's Gender Equity Task Force, among many other pursuits.

What drives Amy as a leader? To find out we presented her with the following key questions.

Q: How did you become a leader? What's been your recipe for professional success?

Backus: I had strong role models in my family and early college education. I was encouraged from a young age that I did not have limits in what I could do with my life. While education was never in question, my family gave me the freedom to choose. I chose to go into teaching and coaching. This profession had a fairly long history on the women's side in my family. Both of my grandmothers were teachers, and one taught first grade in Bolivia when she was in her seventies! I was always comfortable being in front of groups, including people much older than myself. I began teaching sailing to children and adults when I was in my teens and this really gave me great confidence.

My recipe for success has been a core value of always doing things the right way. Play by the rules. Don't cheat, don't lie. Don't make excuses, be honest and be yourself. These values will serve you well.

Q: How have you made a difference in your current institution? What leadership skills or strategies do you rely upon?

Backus: I connect with student athletes. I attend all of their home events. They know that I care about them as people and that I want to see them succeed. I talk with them and try to learn all of their names! I also have bridged many divides across campus. I want people to know who I am and how our mission in athletics aligns with the university mission of enriching students' lives through active learning. I get on university-wide committees so that people get to know me and will subsequently be an advocate if needed.

Q: Talk about a daunting challenge that athletic directors face today. What's been your response to it?

Backus: Keeping up with the Joneses. People [in college athletics] always think the grass is greener somewhere else and seem to be looking for their next move. I try to

keep perspective about what we have at our institution and what we are capable of doing today. My advice to others is to find your greatest attributes and run with them. Stay positive and continually talk about your brand, your initiatives, what you can offer today.

Q: Elaborate upon the following phrase: “Good leadership requires”

Backus: Patience! It takes time to change culture and time for coaches and staff to learn your leadership style, especially after a change. Good leadership requires understanding the history and celebrating the traditions of an institution. Listen, don't jump to conclusions and don't make hasty decisions. Careful and thoughtful decision-making is crucial to good leadership and making equitable decisions.

Q: Finally, what's the best career advice you've ever gotten? Share a story or anecdote as to how you've used this advice to advance professionally.

Backus: A former boss of mine (an athletic director) said that everyone should really make a list of institutions (or corporations for that matter) that you would work for based on their priorities and values. Work hard to align yourself with those values and don't be lured in another direction just to take a job if it is possible. Also, always make your boss look good. If you are an assistant or an associate AD, it is your job to make your boss look great by providing him/her with correct information, talking points, reports, and so on.

Jabbar R. Bennett, Ph.D.



Associate Provost for Diversity
and Inclusion
Northwestern University



Your words and actions can
inspire people or they can
discourage them.

- Jabbar R. Bennett



*Witt/Kieffer is proud to have served
Northwestern University in the recruitment
of its associate provost for diversity and
inclusion.*

Listening to One's Own Leadership Voice

Dr. Jabbar R. Bennett could have taken many career paths, including one that would have prioritized academic research and study. He arrived at his chosen position by heeding the voice inside his head to pursue a calling that would give him both purpose and peace of mind. As Northwestern University's inaugural associate provost for diversity and inclusion (as well as an associate professor of medicine), he spends his time engaged in matters that are of great importance to students, faculty, staff, and peers.

To find out more about what drives Dr. Bennett as a leader, we asked him the following questions:

Q: How did you become a leader? What's been your personal recipe for developing the ability to manage and influence others?

Bennett: From an early age I strived for excellence, inside and outside of the classroom and the workplace. I always believed in being vocal and sharing my thoughts about important issues, in taking initiative and accepting challenges when opportunities arose or when there was an absence of apparent leadership.

I have always had a strong sense of who I am as a person, and that came from my parents. Awareness and confidence translated into developing the abilities I had and acting on them confidently and competently. In addition, I noticed early on that I could get people's attention by the things I would say, that people believed me - believed *in* me - and were inspired by me.

Finally, I developed a sense of accountability. In my mind, accountability means being careful about what you say and do because others are watching and following. Your words and actions can inspire people or they can discourage them. Your words can impact others personally as well as their ability to function professionally.

Q: What are the most daunting challenges that leaders in your position (ie, diversity and inclusion leaders within higher education) are grappling with today and how do you succeed in the role?

Bennett: One of the greatest challenges is balancing the need for response with the need for proactivity. There are times when the only thing you can do is be reactive, but the challenge of diversity and inclusion is that people are looking for leaders, and students are looking for a voice, a space, a place to feel included. We need to be accountable, to listen, and to act. It's not just about doing something just when an issue arrives.

Next, it is important to demonstrate true authenticity, and that means relating to people spanning so many various identities. Often people in roles as CDOs will share themselves and their own stories. It's important to not be too far removed from your own identity, to remember how you would feel if you were on the other end. Be transparent, open, vulnerable, and share your own experience. It humanizes you in the process.

The last thing is to embody empathy and not display sympathy. This means understanding where people are in their unique needs and being responsive, but not feeling sorry for people as you work with them.

Q: How have you made a difference at Northwestern University since you have been there? What leadership skills or strategies do you rely upon?

Bennett: I've been focusing on building and nurturing relationships, spending time with people, visiting them in their spaces, inviting them to share. It's about learning what matters to them and about their values while communicating my own personal and institutional values. Listening will always be a very important part of the work that I do.

Q: Please complete (and elaborate upon) the following phrase: "Great leadership requires . . ."

Bennett: Accountability, empathy, engagement, flexibility, proactivity, responsiveness, transparency, and visibility. Those are eight things that I have been discussing throughout the past year amongst many different groups. There are many aspects of great leadership but these are all imperatives.

Q: Finally, what's the best career advice you've ever gotten? Share a story or anecdote as to how you've used this advice to advance professionally.

Bennett: The best advice came from my mother, who passed away not long ago. She said that peace of mind is worth more than anything else and will keep you grounded during the ebbs and flows of your life and career.

After my post-doc [at Harvard Medical School], I was thinking about a traditional academic career of research, publishing, teaching, and grants. I still do some of those things, but I decided to go into administration. I had an advisor who said, "If I were you I wouldn't do that." But I listened to what my mother had said. I have always been driven by a desire to help people, especially those who traditionally have been marginalized. Being purpose-driven has benefited me and given me peace of mind.

Something else that I would like to share as advice: "This too shall pass." In the work that we do as chief diversity officers, we are working with hard challenges and issues every day. You have to keep a positive attitude and believe that each challenge will have a positive outcome.

Javier Cevallos, Ph.D.



President,
Framingham State University



You always have to be on
your presidential behavior.

- Javier Cevallos, Ph.D.



*Witt/Kieffer is proud to have worked
with Framingham State University in
recruiting its President.*

A College Presidency: The Honeymoon and Beyond

Sworn in May 1 of 2015, Dr. Javier Cevallos considered the first few months of his presidency at Framingham State University in Framingham, Massachusetts, as “a very nice honeymoon.” As much fun as it can be, however, any honeymoon includes plenty of uncertainty and new experiences. “Starting a presidency is always exciting and a little daunting,” President Cevallos says. “You have to memorize names and faces of faculty, student leaders, staff, and people in administration. You also have to connect with donors, alums, and people in the community. It is a bit like swimming in a big ocean, trying to get to know the environment.”

Ecuadoran by birth, Cevallos knows a thing or two about adapting. And fortunately, he has one successful presidency under his belt. During his 12 years at the helm of Kutztown University in Pennsylvania, the school saw its enrollment, academic profile, and student diversity significantly increase. He hopes to have similar success in his current position. Cevallos says the seeds of success are sown if a president takes time initially to understand and listen to the institution and surrounding community before trying to forge a way forward.

“One of the things I mentioned when I came to Framingham is that the vision will be a collective one — the campus, and not just me. I don’t want to be the sole voice in the desert,” he says.

Finding success as a university president today requires intense dedication and a gamut of skills, he adds. But it’s the kind of challenge Cevallos has embraced his entire academic career, from his undergrad days at the University of Puerto Rico, to his unexpected appointment as Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, to his new leadership role at Framingham State.

The Face of a University

Often the single greatest pressure on a new president is fundraising. When Cevallos began at Framingham, the university’s first capital campaign was underway. The initial gifts had already been committed, so Cevallos dedicated the first few years of his tenure to finding smaller gifts and previously untapped resources. And he knows the trustees, as well as the rest of the university, are watching.

Cultivating donors is simply part of a university president’s job now, says Cevallos, who led several capital campaigns at Kutztown. He believes that fundraising success depends on a president’s ability to build relationships. That means connecting with people in a variety of settings, carrying on conversations amidst strangers, giving up evenings and Saturdays to spend time with potential donors.

“You can’t just walk into someone’s office on a cold call and expect that they are going to make a big gift. It takes many visits and in some cases many years,” he says. It can be easy to get discouraged, but “as long as you are making progress, doing all the right things in terms of stewardship and cultivation of donors, things will happen.”

Javier Cevallos, Ph.D.

More on Javier Cevallos, Ph.D.

- *A native of Cuenca, Ecuador*
 - *Moved with family to Puerto Rico at age 14*
 - *Expert in Latin American literature*
-

Being the face of a university is not only time-consuming for a president, it is all-encompassing. Cevallos recalls visiting his native Ecuador a few years ago, where he promptly ran into a few Kutztown alums who recognized him from the alumni magazine cover.

"You are never off," he says. "You always have to be on your presidential behavior. You are indeed always in the spotlight."

Planning and Patience

Years ago, as a professor of Latin American literature, Cevallos didn't think of himself as a role model, even to young Hispanics or Latinos. It wasn't until he became Pennsylvania's first Hispanic university president that he understood how others could be inspired by his ascension into academic leadership.

His presidency at Framingham — the first dedicated "normal school" (i.e., teachers' college) in the U.S. — dovetails nicely with his belief that excellence in teaching should be emphasized in higher education as strongly as research. As a foreign-born American citizen, he takes particular interest in finding ways to expand access to quality teaching and education.

This includes access for a diverse population of students. "Talent and intelligence are equally distributed among all lives everywhere; what is not distributed equally is opportunity," he says. "That is the future of this nation — a minority majority. If we don't have everyone succeeding, we'll be in trouble."

Expanding diversity is but one of the myriad challenges today's university presidents must tackle. When he first became a president more than a dozen years ago, Cevallos jokes, "tweet was what the birds did." Online learning, social media, international recruitment, and programming — it's all changed the way institutions think about education.

Despite the changes, Cevallos is in it long term. His goal, as it was while leading Kutztown, is to serve as Framingham's president for about a decade (so long as the institution agrees, of course). Real results take time, he says.

"By the same token, after 11, 12, or 13 years, the institution needs a change. It's good to have different ideas and perspectives," Cevallos says. "You have achieved what you set out to do — your master plan and strategic plan — and now it's time for somebody else to come in and take the institution in a new direction."

Cevallos' perspective is grounded, realistic. Now that his honeymoon phase at Framingham has come to an end, he has no illusions about the challenges that lay ahead. Despite them, he knows there will be many rewards as well.

David J. Cook, M.D., MHA, FAHA



Chief Clinical and Operating
Officer
Jiahui Health and Jiahui
International Hospital, Shanghai



One must adapt to the environment, allowing oneself and one's thinking to be changed.

- David J. Cook, MD



Witt/Kieffer is proud to have served Jiahui Health and Jiahui International Hospital in the recruitment of its chief clinical and operating officer.

Leadership: A Time to Learn

For David J. Cook, MD, MHA, FAHA, life is about learning. Learning, he says, comes from seizing opportunities for new experiences that force him outside of his comfort zone. Dr. Cook holds a B.A. in Biology and Philosophy from Lehigh University, an M.A. in Philosophy from the University of Tennessee, and an M.D. from Jefferson Medical College, with residency and fellowship training at Mayo Clinic College of Medicine. He was an anesthesiologist and faculty member at Mayo who received an executive MHA from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, and has now chosen to live out the next chapter in his career in charge of operations at Jiahui Health and International Hospital in Shanghai. We recently spoke with David about the connection between leadership and life-long learning.

Q: How did you become a physician leader? What's been your recipe for professional success?

Cook: Physician leadership typically begins with colleagues recognizing excellence in clinical practice. This is where credibility is established and it must be maintained as responsibilities grow. To this end, as a hospital president and enterprise COO, I will spend several half-days a month in the operating rooms and take some overnight calls. This is leading by example; it maintains credibility with the practice, and allows a leader to witness and listen to the challenges of the staff and practice. Credibility comes first.

The second thing, particularly important for physician leaders, is to identify what you don't know. Physician leaders may be appointed on clinical skill or reputation, but one also needs operational, financial, regulatory, and even HR training to understand how extraordinarily complex healthcare is. The leadership transition begins in some ways with the statement: "Medical school did not train me for this . . . time to learn."

Q: You're opening a brand new hospital, with a new philosophy of care and a multi-cultural staff, all in China, where you don't speak the language. What were your first steps and priorities?

Cook: Walking into an organization as a new leader is like walking into the middle of the second act of a play without having seen the script. Within the first several weeks I tried to talk with everyone and see what they faced. Following that, we did an organization-wide heat map to try to understand what everyone thought were the challenges the organization faced. Then we identified priorities and communicated what we would try to do.

Q: Many use the term "cultural competence," the need for which may be an understatement in your situation. How has culture and language impacted your ability to be effective?

Cook: From day one, and now at a year, the majority of my job is about learning. "Organizational Culture" is a leadership buzzword, and there is that, and then there is China. What Chinese consumers want from healthcare is different from the U.S., how practice is organized differs, the knowledge base and training differs, the financial

models are completely different, there is little management expertise, and there are also extraordinary challenges to figuring out how to operate under often ambiguous Chinese regulations.

I am at a disadvantage for not having the language skill, because the nature of communication in Chinese is typically non-literal; it does not have the linearity of English; some terms cannot even be translated. That is meaningful. This does compromise my effectiveness. Real language competence is not realistic in three or perhaps five years, so I can only persist in trying to understand.

Q: How do you integrate Western “standards of care” with an Eastern medical tradition?

Cook: This is the most creative and challenging effort of the enterprise. We have to make sense to consumers, we have to establish credibility in ways patients understand while maintaining Western standards. Anticipating a staff that is 75 percent Chinese nationals, we have to find out where they are, identify targets that are very practical compromises, then do lots of training and even more communication.

Q: In your tenure thus far, what have been your greatest accomplishments? What leadership skills or strategies did you rely upon?

Cook: My greatest accomplishment as a new leader, and really an outsider, has been to restructure perhaps half of the enterprise strategic plan before the end of my seventh month. This meant unwinding a lot of things on the road map, which people had a stake in, and greatly increasing the focus of the organization to do many fewer things well. We also introduced a lot of phasing in the strategic plan to be safe, but also to be able to pivot as we learn from the market.

Q: What’s the best career advice you’ve ever gotten?

Cook: There are a couple of quotes I often think about, which are relevant to hard choices like changing one’s life, or facing so great a challenge. I would urge anyone to read Roosevelt’s speech known as “The Man in The Arena”. The other is something Richard Branson said, to paraphrase . . . if a great opportunity comes up, and you don’t know if you can do it, say “yes” and then figure it out.

Q: What advice would you give others contemplating an overseas executive role?

Cook: My experience in China is that in one’s self, there is an absolute requirement for courage, tenacity and adaptability. In facing outward, into the organization, and to the world it is mostly the latter. One must adapt to the environment, allowing oneself and one’s thinking to be changed. One’s identity and core principles must be maintained, but perhaps changing radically the ways in which those principles are made manifest.

David M. Harlan, M.D.



Diabetes Division Chief
Co-Director, UMass Diabetes
Center of Excellence
UMass Medical School and
UMass Memorial Medical
Center



The military system made
me aware of leadership.

- David M. Harlan, MD



*Witt/Kieffer is proud to have served
UMass Memorial Medical Center in the
recruitment of this executive.*

Leaders Earn Their Stripes Every Day

David M. Harlan, MD, has had a distinguished career as a researcher, educator, clinician, and leader in the diabetes field, currently serving as the Diabetes Division Chief and Co-Director of the UMass Diabetes Center of Excellence at UMass Medical School and its clinical affiliate UMass Memorial Medical Center. What helped shape Dr. Harlan as a leader, however, was a distinguished medical career in the U.S. Navy and then subsequently in the U.S. Public Health Service, during which time he served as the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) internal research program's Diabetes Branch Chief. He retired from the US PHS in 2009 with the rank of Captain.

In the interview below, Dr. Harlan shares insights on how the military shaped his career and how it can build other medical leaders.

Q: What drew you to the military when you were young?

Dr. Harlan: I had a generous offer from my parents to pay for my college education, with the understanding that the day I graduated I was on my own. I wanted to continue my research and education at a highly ranked medical school, but the price astounded me. So I applied for a Navy Health Professions scholarship. To be honest, the military was for me then simply a way to get a top quality medical education.

When I went to Duke [the Duke University School of Medicine], my plan was to get in and out in three years so my military obligation would be only three years. The Navy allowed me to do an internship and internal medicine residency at Duke, and also to do further research after graduating from medical school. When the time came to repay my military obligation, I was assigned to the Naval Medical Center in San Diego.

Q: Did you like the military medical environment in San Diego?

Dr. Harlan: Within six months of my wearing the uniform each day, my whole thinking about the military and military medicine changed. Duke was a well-known medical center, but in San Diego I was seeing physicians who were as good or even better; academic medical center physicians are doing research and many other things; military docs are focused solely on delivering care to colleagues and comrades, and they get really good at it.

The other thing that surprised me was just how much I fell in love with the culture – the concept that you're in something for your colleagues and for a greater purpose, which is not as prevalent in the private sector as in the military. It seduced me.

Q: How did you become a leader?

Dr. Harlan: I'm not comfortable calling myself a leader since I think that judgment should be rendered by one's team and colleagues. Even so, I suppose I had some nascent leadership skills but my military service certainly honed, refined, and matured those abilities. What civilians don't understand about the military is the importance of a centuries-old system, the chain of command, such that everybody



I was surprised by the respect and congenial nature of my superior officers.

- David M. Harlan, M.D.



has their role, duties and responsibilities and everybody relies on others carrying out their duties. My experience of civilian culture is that it's a bit more free-for-all. The military system made me aware of leadership, and I saw great examples of it.

Before I joined, I had this concept of the military that most people get from the movies. In the movies officers are barking orders and it's an intimidation thing. I thought I'd have to say, "Yes sir! No sir!" and follow orders all the time. In reality I was surprised by the respect and congenial nature of my superior officers. I found that I would do what superiors asked me to do eagerly because I didn't want to disappoint them. They were counting on me, and I felt privileged to be a part of this organization. I have always tried to lead following their example.

Q: Are there specific skills or strengths you have that directly relate to your military experience?

Dr. Harlan: Yes, and that still comes up at times. The environment here at UMass, like many medical centers, is less top-down than the military. I often hear that we are a matrixed organization and this is typical of most medical centers. My experience is that too often one is given responsibility but not the authority and accountability to act efficiently. I've always believed that it's hard to lead unless people know you're accountable, and that they are for their duties, too. I wouldn't say one system is better than another. I think many people at UMass would say, "Dave's leadership style is different than ours." But I think they would follow that up and say how effective we've been in diabetes.

Q: Please complete (and elaborate upon) the following phrase: "Good leadership requires . . ."

Dr. Harlan: Character, integrity, clear communications skills, and genuine mutual respect.

Q: Do you think that healthcare organizations can/should be more proactive in recruiting current or former service members? How can they do so?

Dr. Harlan: I would encourage it. I think people do things that are in their perceived self interest. If your motive in HR is to see academic medical centers function better, consider [veterans] seriously. The leadership skills that one learns in the military are second to none. If I have two equal candidates on paper and one of them served a career in the military, I would absolutely take the person from the military.

It's easy to think that if someone has spent a career in the military they have a narrow view, but my experience is that it is just the opposite. In the services, you move and are plopped into a completely new environment every two or three years. Over your career you will have adapted to many different and challenging situations. It expands your brain.

Q: Finally, what advice do you have for service veterans who are transitioning into civilian careers and leadership opportunities?

Dr. Harlan: Anticipate that things run a little differently. Be patient. Keep your eyes open and listen very carefully to what your colleagues and leaders are saying, and adapt. And they will.

Karla Hughes, Ph.D.



Chancellor,
University of Arkansas at
Monticello



Leadership is a process and learning is continuous.

- Dr. Karla Hughes



Witt/Kieffer is proud to have served the University of Arkansas at Monticello in the recruitment of its chancellor.

A Story of Preparedness, Perseverance and Passion

Karla Hughes brings a wealth of experience to her role as chancellor at the University of Arkansas at Monticello – the first female to lead a four-year university in that state’s system. She previously held the position of executive vice president and provost of the University of Louisiana system, and administrative and tenured academic positions at a host of other leading institutions. Throughout her personal rise she has embraced and tackled issues related to women’s leadership, organizational change, community engagement, and student graduation and success. Her successes are noteworthy for someone, who at a young age, was not destined for higher education.

Q: How did you become a leader?

Hughes: No one expected or encouraged me to go to college, and quite frankly, I did not have the self-confidence to believe that I would be successful. However, three women changed my life. First was my high school home economics teacher. She decided that all of her students should at least experience being on a campus and had a required field trip to the Kansas State University Open House. That day changed everything for me. Once at KSU, I was selected for a pilot project for first generation students. The Dean of Women headed up the project that was designed to help us navigate the campus, establish a network, and encourage us to believe in ourselves. And, finally, the Dean of the College of Home Economics was the kind of leader who was visible, involved with students, and motivated those around her to do their best.

I still remember the day that I decided that I wanted to be a dean, and I went to work learning everything I could about higher education and leadership. Of course, I did the traditional things like get involved and volunteer for projects that put me in leadership roles. However, I think that I began the process of being a leader as I watched other leaders – good and bad – impact organizations and people.

Q: How then would you describe your recipe for professional success?

Hughes: My recipe for professional success is to understand that leadership is a process and learning is continuous. Success comes from never being satisfied with the status quo and always looking within to become better than I am today.

Q: Do academic leaders who thrive in state systems need different or additional qualities than those who thrive on independent campuses? What defines good system leadership today?

Hughes: State systems require an understanding of group dynamics, the power of leverage, and how to work as a team – in other words, great things can be accomplished if you do not care who gets the credit. It is easier for those on independent campuses to lose sight of the power of collaboration and the issues all of higher education face. I believe this is partly because an independent campus is generally governed by a Board that focuses on that campus only, whereas state systems are governed by a Board responsible for multiple campuses.



A woman leader must be thoughtful and strategic but cannot waste time second-guessing herself.

- Dr. Karla Hughes



Good system leadership is defined by an understanding of the political environment and the state of higher education today. In addition, an effective system leader focuses on why higher education is critical in today's society and works toward that end.

Q: What is your take on the state of women's leadership in higher education, and what advice do you have for women whom you mentor?

Hughes: While there are many more women in leadership roles in higher education, there is still the initial assumption that men are better as chief executive officers "just because." And, even when women are placed in leadership positions, many stand back and question their decisions and actions in a way that is not done with men in leadership roles.

Therefore, it is important for a woman in higher education leadership to know that attitudes and assumptions are still alive and well, while using all of their innate talents, knowledge, and experience to move the institution forward. A woman leader must be thoughtful and strategic but cannot waste time second-guessing herself.

The advice I give to women that I mentor is to acquire knowledge vigorously and gain a broad range of experiences to expand leadership opportunities. I also tell them to know themselves well - know what you need to keep your balance and understand how you work so that you surround yourself with the right people and remain calm in any crisis.

I also encourage women to find at least one trustworthy person who complements their strengths and weaknesses. If possible, create the opportunity to work with that person through promotions and/or institutional changes in a mentoring relationship. I have done this with my Chief of Staff and we have created a team that operates efficiently and effectively.

And, finally, I would tell them to look to those who have a deep understanding of the issue of women and leadership. One of the best resources is *Women and Leadership in Higher Education* by Longman and Madsen. I am a believer that the more we know and understand, the better we are able to work with or within any situation.

Q: What is the best career advice you've ever gotten?

Hughes: How a leader reacts in a crisis sets the tone for the rest of the organization; therefore, you need to develop a sense of calm while addressing the issue.

This advice has served me well as I have advanced in higher education leadership because I have been involved in reorganization and institutional change that tends to upset everyone. As long as I could set the tone, over-reaction and anxiety were minimized.

Q: Finally, please complete the following phrase: "Good leadership requires . . ."

Hughes: Personal integrity, perseverance, and passion.

Bill Moore



President and CEO
Zoological Society of Florida

More on Moore:

- *Moore is an avid pilot, and flying is his one true escape from the pressures of work.*
 - *What he misses about corporate life: the many available services and "1-800 corporate help numbers."*
 - *What he doesn't miss about corporate life: "never wearing socks that aren't black."*
-

Witt/Kieffer is proud to have consulted with the Zoological Society of Florida on the search assignment that led to the hiring of Bill Moore as president and CEO.

Thriving Species: The Nonprofit Leader with Corporate Roots

Today's nonprofit organizations are, by choice or necessity, becoming more businesslike and "corporate" in how they run themselves. This isn't always a bad thing, and becoming more corporate doesn't mean that a foundation or charity must sacrifice its mission, values or culture.

Nonprofits are simply different animals today, suggests William "Bill" Moore, president and CEO of the Zoological Society of Florida, the 501(c)(3) not-for-profit which supports Zoo Miami. "The only difference between our business and a for-profit business is how we file our taxes," he says. "We can make money, we can grow, and we can even own for-profit businesses."

That said, nonprofits still hold a unique allure for many career-minded professionals—a defining purpose, a sense of unity and fulfillment among staff, the chance to serve the greater good. Nonprofit leadership positions are viewed as rewarding destinations, especially to many executives who have made their mark in the corporate world and want to do so in the nonprofit realm as well.

Moore is an excellent case in point. He represents a thriving species of nonprofit leaders who are steeped in corporate experience. He spent much of his career as a senior executive with Six Flags Entertainment Corporation, then later as president and CEO of the Independence Visitor Center Corporation in Philadelphia, followed by a stint as COO of the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. He has also been an active civic leader, serving as a board member of Visit Florida and the Brevard Zoo.

A Focus on Culture

Moore brought this crossover blend of sensibilities and strategies to the Zoological Society of Florida in January 2014, following a nationwide recruitment. It was an attractive role. The zoo hosts approximately a million visitors a year, is the focal point of animal and wildlife conservation and education efforts in the greater Miami area, and has partnerships across the U.S. and abroad to support endangered species and wildlife education. Among its latest initiatives are a newly launched Conservation Teen Scientist program, a research agreement with Florida International University, and a \$49 million, "Florida: Mission Everglades" exhibit.

The new president and CEO faced challenges as well. There had been significant turnover among the society's leadership team prior to Moore's arrival, and donations and engagement from many long-time supporters were flagging. A SWOT analysis—looking at organizational Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats—revealed cultural friction. In particular there seemed to be a disconnect between the society board, comprised of major benefactors, and the zoo staff.

As happens in many nonprofits, staff members were inclined to see the board's role as raising money, while the board tended to view staff as those who spent it. "We set about trying to close the gap," Moore says. One way was giving the two groups meaningful opportunities to interact—for example, having picnics or asking staff members to regularly attend board meetings so that they could introduce themselves and share their pains and passions. Zoo employees could in turn get to



If I have helped the organization and its people move forward, I'm good with that.

— Bill Moore



know board members and gain an appreciation of the extent of their voluntary commitment to the organization.

“The point is to change the relationship culture to one built on trust and respect,” says Moore. “When staff and the board are physically in the same space, they begin to understand that they are both proud of what they do and both here for the same reasons”—primarily, a love of animals.

Guiding Principles: Trust and Transparency

The initiatives to strengthen the culture within the Zoological Society of Florida reflect Moore's basic leadership philosophy of trust and transparency. People don't necessarily have to like each other, but they should strive to understand each other. This applies to donors as well. “I don't try to convince them that everything is always great, because it hasn't been in the past and there will inevitably be issues in the future,” he says.

Transparency applies to donors as well. Moore and his leadership team seek to have regular, face-to-face contact with donors to establish bonds, maintain engagement, and address concerns. One donor who had pulled back support in recent years has been brought firmly back into the fold through Moore's honest assessments of zoo challenges and needs, regular and open lines of communication, and invitations to attend important events such as exhibit openings, he says.

He sees a strong work ethic around him every day at the society and zoo, which is the ultimate form of satisfaction. “I'm not an easy guy to work for,” he admits. “I demand a lot, but if you have influence in anyone's life, it's a powerful thing.”

Moore's influence is truly being felt at the Zoological Society of Florida and Zoo Miami. “For me, that's the value,” he says. “It's not the check, the chair, or the name on the office. If I have helped the organization and its people move forward, I'm good with that.”

Best of Both Worlds

Clearly, Moore's leadership philosophy serves him well in a variety of positions and organizations. He refuses to see nonprofits like the zoo as wholly distinct from corporations—the “product” they are selling is often less tangible but still just as real and important.

He is also quick to remind those around him that the corporate world has learned a thing or two from nonprofits. Companies realize that, more than ever, employees want to control their own destinies and love what they do, and corporations must cater to their needs and help workers find fulfillment in their work—a very not-for-profit concept. Many modern workplace phenomena—pool tables in the lunchroom, animals in the office, for instance—trace their origins back to nonprofits striving to keep valuable employees satisfied.

Moore is proof of the overlap between good leadership in for-profits and nonprofits. Nonprofits are indeed different animals today, and require leaders who live and breathe the mission, yet also know how to get down to business.

Reggie Pearson



Vice President of Operations
MedStar Georgetown
University Hospital



Nothing great has been
achieved without vision.

- Reggie Pearson



Witt/Kieffer is proud to have served
MedStar Georgetown University
Hospital in the recruitment of its Vice
President of Operations.

A Veteran with Vision

For Reggie Pearson, the climb to the executive suite in healthcare had its roots in military service. Since that time, Pearson has learned about the importance of vision in leadership. He has also learned that the vision and skills of one person will not translate to success without the collective energy and skill of teams.

To find out more about how Pearson became a leader, we posed the following questions:

Q: How did you become a leader? Put another way, what's been your recipe for professional growth and success?

Pearson: I received my first formal leadership training when I joined the Air Force, where I was exposed to high levels of responsibility and authority at a relatively young age. The military provided an education in Radiologic Technology and I continued to work in that field after leaving the military to attend college and graduate school. My jobs were typically supervisory which presented opportunities for leadership development, since I was responsible for managing staff and resources.

By the time I transitioned to healthcare management as a career, I was very comfortable leading people, managing resources, and making decisions. These experiences became the basis for core competencies and leadership behaviors that continue to sustain me. I think these competencies have been the foundation for my professional growth. I always do the best job I can. I'm a believer in the golden rule: "Do unto others how you would have them do unto you." I try to understand where my organization is trying to go and develop strategies that help it get there faster. And finally, I never become complacent. I'm always looking for ways to learn and improve. I was fortunate in that others recognized my leadership potential, even when I did not. As a result, I believe in investing in people to help them achieve their goals.

Q: What's the most daunting challenge that leaders in healthcare operations are grappling with today? How have you responded to this challenge?

Pearson: The transition from volume-based to value-based reimbursement remains a challenge. Pay for performance is forcing organizations to change their business models and reevaluate priorities. One of my areas of concentration has been how we can successfully manage expenses in a world where reimbursement models are quickly changing. I've focused on a number of things. They include partnering with physicians to help introduce programs that reduce expense and improve quality, leveraging vendor relationships to maximize system-wide expense reduction opportunities, and developing predictive analytic tools and using dashboards to assist in the decision making process. I'm a firm believer in using data to help make decisions, evaluate trends, and measure performance. I'm also a strong advocate of process improvement using lean methodology.



Communicating with staff helps to build connection and commitment.

- Reggie Pearson



Q: What leadership skills or strategies do you rely upon most in your day-to-day work?

Pearson: I try to make sure I clearly communicate messages. Poor communication can lead to mistakes, mishaps, and delays. Communicating with staff helps to build connection and commitment. If I'm trying to manage every activity it sends the message to my direct reports that I don't trust their abilities or they are somehow incompetent. Delegating tasks to staff members gives them an opportunity to develop their skills and allows me to focus on more strategic objectives.

Q: How did your military experience prepare you to be a leader? Are there specific skills or strengths that directly relate to your experience as a veteran?

Pearson: The military prepares you to adapt to situational challenges as missions may change at a moment's notice. This has been very helpful as I have transitioned to new roles and gained new responsibilities during my career. The military also taught me to discern between short- and long-range goals - in essence, the ability to see the big picture and think strategically. Another important element that is part of the military environment is an appreciation for diversity. There is something to be said for the ability of people from different cultures and ethnicities to transition into a cohesive, mission-driven unit.

Q: Please complete (and elaborate upon) the following phrase: "Good leadership requires . . ."

Pearson: Having clear vision is a crucial element in leadership because, how can you effectively lead others if you can't see where you are going? Good leaders can clearly see what they are trying to achieve and articulate that objective succinctly to those they lead. Vision, then, becomes the driving force behind organizational goals and objectives. While the goal itself might dictate our approach to achieving the objective, nothing great has been achieved without vision.

Q: Finally, what's the best career advice you've ever gotten? Please share a story or anecdote as to how you've used this advice to advance professionally.

Pearson: When I was in the military, Technical Sergeant Johnny Long, who was my Radiology Instructor, told me no one can be successful in this profession if they try to make it alone. I've never forgotten that advice and I frequently share it with new employees during hospital orientation.

Another piece of advice related to team dynamics came from Heather Rohan, who was my mentor and CEO with HCA. She told me to always include representatives from each group a decision will affect when assembling teams. In many instances my role as a leader has been to provide guidance and direction. I can point to a number of successful outcomes that have reduced expenses, improved quality and patient safety, fostered innovation, and increased satisfaction because of teams I have formed, led, or joined. While leadership was essential to the success of these endeavors, the most important element was having the right people on the team.

Dave Power



President and CEO
Perkins



How many lives have we improved? In what way?

- Dave Power



Witt/Kieffer is proud to have served Perkins in the recruitment of its President and Chief Executive Officer.

Innovation Around the Mission

In 2013 when the recruitment began for a new president and CEO for Perkins – known best as the parent organization for the Perkins School for the Blind – Dave Power did not consider himself a candidate. Power sat on the Perkins board and knew the organization intimately, but assumed he wasn't the right fit. He had a corporate background, having spent 25 years in a variety of private-sector executive roles: CEO of a startup, chief marketing officer of a public information security company, general manager of a 160-person division of a technology company. He had also spent a decade as a venture capitalist, investing in and advising the management teams of fast-growing organizations on how to cope with change.

The job was more about taking the organization to its next level (defined broadly), something that Power was quite familiar with from his past experiences. "The position description focused on strategy, organizational leadership, understanding of technology, investments in new products and services," Power notes. "Those were all things I had been doing all of my career."

There was one other significant factor that drew Power to pursue the president and CEO position. It was what introduced him to Perkins more than 25 years ago: his son David is deafblind and had matriculated at Perkins for his entire schooling, graduating in 2009. With support, David is now an active member of his community.

The following is a conversation with Dave Power on life, leadership, and running a nonprofit.

Q: You've had a distinguished career in technology, finance, consulting, and more, yet being president and CEO of Perkins is the "most important role" of your career. How so?

Power: Blindness, deaf-blindness, and multi-handicapped issues have been around forever. They are stubborn problems, along with the very high unemployment rate for these individuals as adults. If you can make a dent in terms of better ways to prepare students for a more productive and fully engaged life, that has enormous tangible value. It's hard to compare that with the kind of results you get in the private sector.

Q: Despite your many experiences did you see this position as daunting at first?

Power: I wouldn't say daunting. I think I have enough preparation on what Perkins is about. Certainly you see the world from different perspective when you're in the driver's seat. Perkins is a large, complex organization . . . there are many moving parts. It's not the leaders job to manage all those moving parts, but mostly to make sure things are aligned, people are working on the right things, the organization has the right priorities, the culture and the organization are working well, and then occasionally swooping in to do some firefighting or problem-solving, or to jump on a new opportunity for the organization. All of that for me has been very manageable because of my background at Perkins, and my own professional

More about Dave Power

- Power has worked for Sun Microsystems, RSA Security, Novera Software, Mercator Software, and Fidelity Ventures, plus his own consulting firm, Power Strategy.
- He earned engineering degrees at Tufts University and an MBA at Stanford.
- He has taught strategic management and design thinking at the Harvard Extension School and received the Joanne Fussa Distinguished Teaching Award in 2014.
- He tweets regularly at @PerkinsCEO.

experiences before I got here that gave me a, say, toolkit to take on the challenges as well as the opportunities.

Q: Has it required a shift in mindset to run a nonprofit organization like Perkins?

Power: Yes. To be the CEO of an organization would be natural transition or career path for me, but to run a nonprofit, that's what was different. If you presented [leadership roles at] a number of nonprofit organizations to me, I might not have jumped on any them. It was Perkins that I knew so well—what the opportunities are, what the challenges are . . . I was sure if I stepped in I could make a positive impact.

Q: You are no stranger to nonprofits, but did you have any preconceptions or biases about running one?

Power: The biggest fear that I had about a nonprofit was, can the organization move quickly enough and can you have the kind of goal-setting and accountability that I was used to in the private sector? In a private company, things tend to align around financial objectives. You pick a goal, and your investments are measured around that financial goal, and the things that are measured toward that financial goal are usually revenue and profits.

In a nonprofit organization everyone is mission-driven, so the metrics for how you're doing in achieving that mission are not as easy to craft. They're not as easy for people to come to similar views on whether the organization is "on mission" or not. How many lives have we improved? In what way? You try to look at what you're trying to achieve and whether you have really made progress.

Q: Are the corporate and nonprofit sectors moving closer together, and what are the implications for leadership?

Power: They're doing different things as they always have. One is mission-driven without a pure financial objective. The other has financial objectives and aims for wealth creation. Where the blurring or cross-fertilization is going on is that more talented leaders are choosing to get involved in mission-driven organizations. You're seeing millennials, the new generation of the workforce, consciously choosing to take jobs where they can "make an impact." This is different from the Gordon Gekko, BMW generation of the eighties and nineties. Even private companies when they're hiring talented people are crafting messages about how their company is giving back to society.

Leaders are increasingly looking to nonprofits as places to make a difference. The more results-oriented not-for-profit organizations become, the more they will attract leaders who want to get things done. A lot of leaders have chosen not to spend their personal time in nonprofits because they don't feel like they can do enough as leaders. If they knew that you can make the kind of impact in nonprofits that make private sector companies want to recruit you—there's a switch—then maybe they would see the opportunity in a new light. We might then see more executives building their resumes as leaders of mission-driven organizations.

About **Witt/Kieffer**

Witt/Kieffer is the nation's preeminent executive search firm supporting organizations improving the quality of life, including those in healthcare, education, academic medicine, life sciences, sports and the not-for-profit sector. It also serves clients through its Board Services, Information Technology and Leadership Solutions practices, which offer services that further strengthen client enterprises.

