Interpersonal skills in chairing an engineering department

Efrossini C. Kalkani†, Leda G. Boussiakou‡ & Iris K. Boussiakou*

San José State University, San José, United States of America†
University of York, York, England, United Kingdom‡
University of Kent, Canterbury, England, United Kingdom*

ABSTRACT: The present research refers to interpersonal skills in supervising faculty, particularly with regard to how the chair of an engineering department should be prepared to manage his/her team of faculty members. The department chair should understand his/her function and develop leadership skills by practicing different behavioural styles. The department chair should also have the ability to listen, motivate and coach faculty members, to delegate authority and to create a positive climate in the department by expecting quality performance. Furthermore, the department chair should schedule his/her activities, apply problem-solving techniques, and know what the rules are for his/her success in engineering education.

INTRODUCTION

The objective of this article is to give practical guidelines to department chairs who accept heading an engineering department. It is envisaged that these guidelines will facilitate the application of skills that will lead to successful performance and smooth interaction with faculty members during a semester while they work to achieve the educational objectives of the department.

This article focuses on the skills needed for the department chair to manage effectively and efficiently his/her department. Beyond understanding his/her role and preparing an activities schedule, the department chair should undertake the following tasks:

- Apply different leadership skills;
- Develop the ability to listen;
- Motivate and coach faculty members;
- Delegate authority;
- Help faculty members in personal and professional development;
- Create a positive department climate;
- Solve problems;
- Know the rules that will predict personal success.

The main activities the department chair has in managing the department can be summarised in obtaining control of faculty members, leading and motivating faculty, taking appropriate corrective actions, reaching the required levels of performance, and assessing faculty members' performance.

As long as the department chair has displayed interest for his/her position and the decision is made, he/she accepts the responsibilities and those faculty members he/she has to work with. The department chair accepts the role as supervisor and facilitator with all of the benefits available, and accepts faculty members as the persons he/she will work with during his/her term. The chair needs to be able to manage faculty-members' time and actions according to a plan of actions, and work towards developing faculty during his/her term and solving problems regarding assignments, personal problems and interactions with students.

FUNCTIONS OF FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

Department chairs are a vital link between faculty members and the university and are those who can create an image for the university. This comes from their behaviour and the way they succeed to manage the learning process [1][2].

The main duties and rights of faculty are in student support (teaching, advising, counselling), instructional policies and resources (green-sheets, office hours), faculty support and benefits (orientation, workshops, consultation, medical and life insurance, payroll, holidays and leave), retention, tenure and promotion procedures. The engineering faculty is expected to perform the main functions [3]. This includes the following activities:

- Teach undergraduate and graduate courses, as well as develop new courses;
- Supervise laboratories, tutorials and seminars, students' projects and theses;
- Engage in research and publish research in engineering journals and conference proceedings;
- Apply for research funding and supervise students involved in research;
- Engage in services to government, industry, professional boards and the community;
- Engage in academic planning, staff selection and curriculum development;

- Engage in student advising, career counselling, professional referencing for employment, scholarships and memberships of prestigious organisations;
- Engage in one-to-one teaching of students during office hours or by special appointments.

The main functions of the department chair are associated with the expectation to provide vision and leadership for the department, to demonstrate exceptional academic and administrative skills, and to display strong commitment to faculty recruitment and development. The department chair is expected to be an excellent scientist with strong academic credentials and be able to provide direction and expert administration to his/her department. This includes the following undertakings:

- Demonstrate leadership and management skills in higher education;
- Administer programmes and improvements in facilities;
- Perform fiscal management and develop resources;
- Cultivate strong ties with industries and granting agencies;
- Interact well with alumni and be active in raising funds;
- Lead curriculum planning and development, and foster research activities;
- Guide graduate and undergraduate instructional and research activities;
- Teach graduate courses and advise PhD and MS students;
- Demonstrate interpersonal skills, as well as recruit, mentor, evaluate and promote faculty;
- Build collegial interactions with upper administration;
- Encourage collaboration with other departments and colleges;
- Represent the department to other educational entities and the community;
- Demonstrate a commitment to diversity.

Although the department chair may perform perfectly well, his/her success is measured from the success of his/her faculty. The responsibility of the department chair increases as his/her success increases through the efforts of faculty. However, there are certain challenging situations to be faced, such as having faculty members with difficult personalities, faculty the department chair knows from previous cooperations and with whom he/she has social connections, and faculty members who are older and require respect.

As general recommendations for behaviour, the department chair should make clear to faculty that he/she is in charge of the department and that the departmental responsibilities come first. The chair should also avoid displaying weaknesses to faculty or exhibit friendly behaviour to some of them, and assure them that a friendship may continue after the end of his term.

Regarding older faculty, the department chair should allow comments from their experience, involve them in course decision-making, make them teach other faculty members, facilitate their further learning, but never depend on them or permit competition. Regarding younger faculty, the department chair should show high expectations for their success, facilitate their capabilities in finding solutions and taking initiatives for improvement, develop excellent, highly energetic and innovative faculty members, and keep them busy in doing their assignments.

In order to avoid difficult situations, the department chair should concentrate on faculty's performance in case of displeasure, and encourage faculty members help each other in case they compete with him/her. The chair should also answer in a vague way to questions that may have ambiguous intentions, and handle in a blurred way comparisons made to other department chairs.

ACTIVITIES SCHEDULING SKILLS

In scheduling activities, the department chair should start with the setting of goals. In research performed on supervision effectiveness, the setting of goals and planning is related to productivity in the workplace, and can be extended to managing an engineering department [4][5].

The department chair sets the goals jointly with faculty, instead of imposing the goals, makes sure the goals are possible to attain, defines the tasks with detail, makes the tasks measurable, with a given duration, quantity and quality, defines the milestones and deadlines.

So as to perform the planning and scheduling of activities, the department chair may need to apply certain personal planning procedures considering the objectives and final results, and organise the time schedule on paper. At first, the activities to reach final results should be listed by grouping similar activities and assigning realistic durations to each activity, as well as their precedence. Then, the department chair should set deadlines for projects, and consider the time available, as well as faculty members' priorities and workloads.

The department chair creates contingency plans and prepares alternatives in case faculty members request more time; also, the department chair needs to plan time to prepare projects, revise projects, assign duties and delegate activities to faculty members. The department chair has to assign time to faculty members in order to gain information on developments in science and engineering, undertake research and publish papers, participate in engineering fora, and perform administrative tasks for the university. All these activities need an effective system to facilitate the planning of activities and deadlines, as well as the use of appropriate software.

In starting an action plan, the department chair should consider all of the activities included and group them into categories, search for missing activities, note the duration and starting time, and sort activities into a sequence of their starting times. For example, the department chair could develop a Gantt diagram and assign milestones and deadlines. He/she should also separate the activities that he/she controls and those controlled by others, as well as the flexibility of task durations and their ending times. The department chair needs to understand that good performance requires careful planning.

A simple work plan will need to include the objectives, the quantity or quality measured, as well as a list of activities. For each activity, the name of the person responsible needs to be stated, the duration, the preceding and the succeeding activities, plus certain comments and information for follow-up. Also, information on the resources needed have to be added, including the procurement of these resources. If the activities are few, then the planning can be done manually, otherwise, planning software will need to be used.

In preparing and planning activities, the department chair should gain agreement from faculty, instead of forcing a schedule upon them. This is advisable so that the department chair can gain better results and a higher level of commitment from staff. The department chair should also communicate the goals of the work to be done by faculty, discuss the goals and activities, consider their feedback and agree with them in setting the goals. During the discussion, the department chair should encourage input from faculty members, especially with regard to the objectives of certain assignments, and indicate what assistance is available or permitted and from where, how to seek assistance, permit faculty members to voice their objections without fear of reprisal, evaluate those faculty members who display commitment, and motivate those who do not want to commit. The department chair also has to remain flexible so as to revise goals in case he/she perceives them to be unobtainable.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

There are four prime leadership styles that the department chair can choose from to develop his/her skills. All people have their own behavioural style in managing or supervising people; however, there will be times when the department chair will need to utilise a different style in order to obtain a quick response from faculty [6][7].

Considering the main characteristics of behaviour to be either straight or non-straight, as open or non-open, as two axes normal to each other, one can find in the four quadrants formed by the two axes the main characteristics of behavioural types or leadership styles. These are defined by the following four types:

- Type Alpha: Straight and Open behaviour (socialising, persuading, partnering, influencing, encouraging, counselling and convincing).
- Type Beta: Straight and Non-open behaviour (directing, prescribing, ordering, commanding, requiring, instructing and conducting),
- Type Gamma: Non-straight and Non-open behaviour (thinking, permitting, allowing, tolerating, authorising, speculating and considering),
- Type Delta: Non-straight and Open behaviour (relating, participating, concerning, respecting, sharing, assisting and supporting).

The department chair who exhibits Type Alpha behaviour, high task and high relationship behavioural type, accepts faculty members' comments in setting rules or making decisions, communicates with faculty continuously, may interact socially, gives and takes information, and supports and encourages faculty in their work and personal problems. The department chair should utilise this style when there are high levels of communication and confidence, faculty members are willingly committed to their duties and their performance capability is high.

The department chair who displays Type Beta behaviour, a high task and low relationship behavioural type, accepts problems to be brought to him for solutions, avoids interpersonal communications, prefers giving orders and one way communications, controls the progress of work, and makes his own action plans or decisions. The department chair uses this style when there is a low level of maturity, wants to gain control temporarily, and when there is lack of time or transition periods, or if faculty members are beginners or lack the requisite level of skills.

The department chair who demonstrates Type Gamma behaviour, a low task and low relationship behavioural type, defines assignments and projects, accepts faculty to make decisions and solve problems, communicates openly and spontaneously, gives help and support, and allows faculty members to work on their own projects. The department chair employs this style when faculty members are mature to undertake initiatives and are capable of performing assignments with little need for advice.

The department chair who presents Type Delta behaviour, a low task and high relationship behavioural type, communicates easily on personal and work related subjects, sets expectations about methods and results, expects faculty members to solve their own problems, and guides and helps faculty members to structure their work when needed. The department chair engages this style when faculty members display behavioural maturity and discipline, have objectives for personal and professional growth, when both the department chair and faculty have the relevant experience, and facilitating is only needed in group projects.

Application of Leadership Styles

The main duty of the department chair is to manage the administrative process and lead faculty members to success; hence, the chair has to apply the appropriate leadership style to motivate faculty. The department chair should choose the leadership style depending on the personalities of faculty members and the tasks that need to be accomplished. In each situation, a different style can be used according to the existing needs, as follows:

- Projects: high quality and well-defined projects given, and making faculty members understand individual assignments (Type Alpha and Beta);
- Satisfaction: consideration of faculty's problems, developing the motivational levels of faculty, and keeping high sense of morale and ethics (Type Delta);
- Promptness: social and emotional relationships with faculty members to develop their determination and ability for achievement (Type Delta and Gamma);
- Performance: completion of the assignment in a quality manner, improvement of education, knowledge, experience and the ability of faculty members to work on their own (Type Alpha and Gamma).

In order to select the appropriate leadership style, the department chair should investigate certain factors regarding the culture of the university and the encouragement and reward of certain leadership styles. Also, the department chair should investigate what each situation requires, what faculty considers as an effective leadership style, and the level of personal flexibility with regard to shifting to a different style. Otherwise, he/she asks faculty to change their attitudes.

LISTENING SKILLS

Department chairs should develop their listening skills in order to communicate better with faculty in requesting commitment, giving solutions to problems presented by faculty and managing the complaints of faculty and students [8][9].

People usually consider themselves as good listeners, but for different reasons, they cannot retain much of the information they get. Faculty and chairs of departments attending meetings may retain a small amount of what they hear based on individual characteristics of good memory, but they usually forget what they hear in a shorter or longer period.

Department chairs and people in general perform poorly in listening because of mental and emotional activities, such as a lack of concentration and conscious attention, indifference and low expectations, and a loss of interest because of interference of other thoughts.

The department chair faces environmental factors when listening to faculty members. These factors may manifest as internal and external distractions, appearing as faculty problems, student problems, classroom problems, time pressure and work demands. When there are such distractions and the faculty member is upset, the department chair should stop talking or doing things and eliminate distractions. The faculty member should be put at ease, get relaxed and invite the faculty member to speak, while keeping a correct posture and exhibiting the proper non-verbal signs, giving full attention to the faculty member, showing that he/she wants to listen without interrupting. Especially if the faculty member is upset, the department chair should let tension dissipate by using silence, patiently allowing for ventilation to occur after words have been expressed, applying reflection and playing the role of a stress cushion for the faculty member.

After the first stage of listening, the department chair should proceed by asking open-ended questions, as well as questions for clarification and understanding. The chair should paraphrase and restate what he/she has heard to the satisfaction and agreement of the faculty member, empathise, makes true statements of regret, ask for the faculty member's feedback and help, and summarise frequently what he/she has heard.

In order to practice good listening techniques and to have the characteristics of a good listener, the department chair should not assume that the question is known and should not reply before the person has finished speaking. The chair should ask for clarification of what the faculty member has said in detail, never judge the faculty member's ideas before the faculty member has finished talking, and let the faculty member finish what he/she has to say before the chair starts to speak.

Also, in practicing good listening the department chair should keep eye contact with the faculty member when the faculty member is talking, encourage the faculty member if there is hesitation, show understanding by using body language (non-verbal nods), restate and paraphrase what the faculty member has said and ask if he/she has understood correctly. The department chair should listen even if he/she knows what the faculty member is going to say, even if he/she does not like the faculty member's manner of speaking (grammar, choice of words, intonation, accent), even if he/she does not like the faculty member.

MOTIVATING AND COACHING SKILLS

The department chair should motivate faculty by utilising various techniques according to the individual characteristics of faculty members. Supervisors usually manage people by observing and correcting mistakes that should be avoided.

However, motivating faculty in their performance is needed for faculty to succeed [10-12].

Each faculty member wants to satisfy personal needs and goals, which is a difficult task for the department chair in understanding and handling the diversity in the department. Faculty members adjust their personality to the rules of the school, the classroom, other faculty members and the department chair, and make conscious decisions about how to behave. They do not change their behaviour, unless change is in their best interest. Since faculty members expect reward, they avoid unrewarded work, unless they have other reasons to justify their behaviour.

The department chair who wants to motivate faculty should make clear the performance level required and behaviour sought, so that faculty members know and understand what is rewarded. The reward should be proportional to the performance, and be awarded by the end of the performance. There may be environmental factors against the type of reward, such as culture, inadequate or unfair reward, or unattainable performance levels. Each faculty member may have different values for rewards, then the motivation level needs to be adjusted to the reward they want for high quality and quantity performance.

In order to educe faculty motivation, the department chair should observe under what conditions circumstances faculty members are motivated. The department chair has to initiate different motivational tools along with rewards that may be important for some faculty, such as to recognise work that is performed well, the quality and quantity of performance, and the time taken to finish the assignment or project. Also, the reward system may include portions for independent work, group work, creativity and innovation. Praising faculty members for their performance and displaying their work is also a motivational technique.

The assessment, praise and reward of faculty's performance should be realised as soon as the assignment is completed so that faculty know what they did well and if anything was wrong. The praising of faculty can be in public and should refer to each faculty member separately. Honesty and fairness should be employed. Faculty members should never be criticised in public.

Coaching is the process of helping faculty members to develop skills. The main characteristics of coaching are to assign responsibilities and let faculty have authority over their assignment. The department chair should give time to faculty to understand and plan their performance, help them carry out their assignment well on their own by only giving hints. The department chair should then observe what and how they perform, be available for comment on performance and give directions for improvement. Faculty members should understand how well they can do the assignment, if they can improve it and discuss with the department chair what is considered success or failure and how the assignment is compensated.

DELEGATING AUTHORITY SKILLS

In delegating authority, the department chair should give guidelines and instructions to faculty members. The department chair should ask and not order or command what it is he/she wants done, rather, the chair has to explain what he/she wants

to be carried out, but not what is to be avoided. The chair should comment on the importance of what is asked, and let faculty members use their abilities and skills to perform the assignment [13][14].

In gaining feedback from delegating assignments, the department chair may have limited time to follow up, may assume that faculty members are capable in carrying out the assignment, and may not wish to bother following up.

In delegating assignments, the department chair should give the question orally or in writing so that it is encoded in a certain way. The transmission model of communication may be displayed as: sender → encoding method → transmitter → decoding method → receiver. The receivers, ie faculty members, may not all receive the same message because of differences in decoding, which might be on words, sentences and paragraph structures. Faculty members have their own mental maps in interpreting messages. Should the department chair allocate similar assignments, then faculty need to have experience in correctly decoding messages.

When delegating authority, the department chair should choose the right faculty member, make clear the procedure, schedules, checkpoints and the follow-up, explain the desired end-results, state the reasons for assigning the job and the larger project that the job belongs to, motivate the faculty member, give specific guidance on steps to be followed or allow freedom of action. The department chair needs to make sure that the message is transmitted and delivered correctly and that the faculty member is not overloaded.

In delegating authority and work to faculty, there may be resistance from faculty. Some faculty members resist undertaking responsibilities; they prefer the safety of relying on the department chair doing whatever he/she has to do; resistance may also be derived from faculty considering their time too precious to spend in extra activities, and they may or may not get feedback and reward for their performance.

The interests and objectives of the department chair are that faculty perform well, and that his/her managerial and supervising endeavours are successful. The department chair may avoid delegating work to faculty; the main reason for this may be that better performance may be achieved personally, or there may be a loss of control with regard to performance if work is delegated. At the same time, faculty members accepting authority develop their skills and the department chair may have to handle complaints from other faculty members.

Activities that the department chair can delegate to faculty members involve tasks performed better and in less time by faculty members, with less effort than the department chair, such as advising students, plus activities that are positive to faculty's advancement and they accept doing. Department chairs should not delegate activities like accountability and responsibility for managing the department, confidential material on competition and disciplinary actions, contracts for research and legal issues.

In expecting results from faculty members, the department chair may have to be patient, teach the faculty member by using mistakes, and encourage feedback, discussions and questions. The chair should consider the strengths and weaknesses of the faculty member to handle parts of the

assignment and provide assistance if needed. The department chair should declare that success is expected from the faculty member, and that failure is in no case accepted.

DEVELOPING POSITIVE CLIMATE SKILLS

The department chair is responsible in building a positive climate of communication and cooperation and has high expectations from faculty members to foster and maintain a culture of a positive climate [15][16]. The department chair is successful if he/she has high expectations from faculty on the quality and quantity of the work that they perform. Faculty members usually perform up to the levels they are expected to perform, considering the fact that they have family, professional or research work, and other obligations.

In order to create a positive climate of performance, the department chair makes clear the positive factors regarding feelings of belonging, acceptance, interest, encouragement and reward for good work. The department chair should have a friendly, relaxed and accessible manner towards faculty in discussing issues, giving constructive comments and critiques, plus requests for feedback. Also, the department chair should be very professional in delivering assignments, demonstrating procedures, showing results, using advanced methods and techniques, and giving applications and examples.

The outstanding department chair performs in such a way that indicates that he/she is confident, knows personal strengths and abilities, and believes that he/she is capable to teach, train and develop his faculty. The chair can educate faculty members on how to obtain knowledge, have good comprehension and abilities in application, and be able to take initiatives in undertaking analyses, syntheses and evaluations, and how to structure tasks within available time and resources.

In case certain faculty members exhibit negative behaviour that affects the whole department, the chair needs to take corrective measures. This may include investigating what the negative feelings are and to whom they are addressed. The negative feelings addressed to him/her or other faculty members should be accepted, and the good aspects of the faculty member with the negative behaviour should be accepted. Also, the department chair should consider the reasons behind the development of negativity, and investigate if the faculty member concerned lacks knowledge and/or skills, and if he/she is unable to follow the progress of the other faculty members with regard to new materials and techniques.

The department chair, in his/her efforts to make faculty members succeed, should apply frequent monitoring of their progress and make any necessary changes in order to achieve established objectives. If problems arise, the department chair has to solve the problems smoothly and to the benefit of all faculty members. However, changes may not be easy for some, who may develop negative behaviour and, as a result, they reject the department chair and change. Disciplinary action is then required. The department chair has to follow university procedures and guidelines in handling the case in the right manner and be fair with the faculty member concerned.

In making improvements or changes, the department chair should plan the correct timing after collecting information and considering the effect on faculty, the level of acceptance or

rejection of the change, effects on performance, and any unexpected behaviours endangering the department's climate.

Actions that should be taken by the department chair when there is a lack of knowledge on the part of faculty members include giving information, reading material, instructions, procedures, methods, advice and feedback to faculty members. In case of a lack of skills, the department chair should facilitate training, practice coaching, build skills, consider the confidence level of faculty and encourage them, observe the faculty member's achievements and supply feedback. In case of the unwillingness of a faculty member, the department chair should consider the real problems and reasons, attitudes or abilities, health problems, conflict with other activities, rejection of positive solutions, plus any negative behaviour.

FACULTY CAREER DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

In starting his/her term, the department chair should prepare an action plan and make sure about the availability of equipment and supplies. Next, development of faculty should be considered, with regard to the way instruction in the classroom should proceed, the sequence of presentation, discussion, and how understanding should be tested [17][18].

The department chair sets the rules for faculty who should be few and simple. Faculty members should understand what they have to do, where to find resources and assistance, what standards there are to follow, what their responsibilities are, and what is considered as success or failure with regard to their performance.

Faculty should comply with the rules, while the department chair should initially gain their agreement that they understand the rules; he/she should then monitor their compliance with the rules. Faculty behaviour may be positive, negative or unacceptable. In cases of negative behaviour, an effort should be made to turn it into positive behaviour, while previous bad records are cleared if positive behaviour is demonstrated.

The department chair should develop the requirements needed so as to clarify the expectations regarding faculty performance. The department chair should create an outline of the actions considered necessary and should give the general direction of those actions. Faculty performance should be described in measurable terms (ie what, how, who). In cases of bad performance, the importance of the overall performance of the faculty member behaviour should be assessed; if the significance is small, then no action should be taken. Otherwise, the department chair should investigate the knowledge, skills, and willingness of the faculty member to perform well.

In cases when there is a lack of knowledge, the department chair should talk to the relevant faculty member in private – never in public. The chair should pursue good communication and understanding, avoid making assumptions, evaluations, moralising, using generalities and doubtful or strict terms. The department chair should also offer information quickly in order to obtain fast results, provide clarity and yield data, guidelines, and examples. Furthermore, the department chair should give feedback by describing actions and facts, issues and information that the faculty member can use, and direct the discussion on the problem and future performance, never to the person and the past.

When there is a lack of the appropriate skills, the department chair may instruct and train the faculty member or provide training elsewhere. In case the faculty member has forgotten how to use the past skills, then the department chair should offer feedback, coach and allow time until the faculty member can once again utilise those skills. In case the faculty member has the skills and avoids using them, then the department chair will need to motivate the staff member by generating interest and providing initiatives.

In case there is an unwillingness on the part of the faculty member to perform well because of environmental or physical problems in the department, such as air, temperature, noise, lack of resources, materials and equipment, then the department chair should see if the situation can be changed for the benefit of all faculty members.

If all of the above have been tried out and the faculty member continues displaying bad performance, then the department chair should examine to see greater concern needs to be applied, including recognition and attention, or tougher assignments, rules that comply with the culture, or higher rewards.

The last activity the department chair must take, if all of the above options have failed, is to start the procedure for punishment and dismissal, while also keeping good records of the procedure.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS

At certain times, the department chair may have to address difficult situations. When such events arise, the liking or disliking of faculty is less important to the main objective of getting faculty members to perform and develop themselves. In cases when there is disruptive behaviour from faculty, the department chair should be called upon to provide a solution to the problem [19][20].

In the managing of faculty, the department chair has to resolve different problems, such as staff members not sticking to office hours, faculty unwilling to make an add-drop accommodation, cases of students contesting grades, of unprofessional behaviour from faculty members (cf campus code of unprofessional conduct), and of disorganised faculty members with lectures that are hard to follow.

When handling certain cases, such as those listed above, the department chair should undertake the following when confronting the faculty member:

- Discuss the facts or records, not assumptions;
- Discuss actions, not the person;
- Centre on future actions, not the past;
- Display confidence;
- Encourage discussion.

During the discussion, the department chair should listen carefully, allow the faculty member say all he/she has to say, use open-ended questions, allow the faculty member to save face, and admit or share the responsibility according to the case. By ending the discussion, the department chair may compliment the good sides of faculty member's behaviour, make a summary of what has been stated from both sides, what has been agreed upon, write down commitments, make clear what is acceptable and how the faculty member will reach

it. Later, the department chair will need to perform a follow-up of the agreement and review the progress of the faculty member.

The department chair should choose a place with no people or equipment at a quite period (the end of the class or the end of the day, so that the effect upon other faculty members is minimal) and the situation can *cool down*. The chair can then proceed with solutions after listening, clarifying, talking about the problem and the solutions, and seeking agreement.

In preparing for a discussion with the faculty member, the department chair may need to make sure that the faculty member understands the problem, while also knowing what the expected performance is and what the consequences of not complying are. Also, the department chair should ask questions regarding the persons involved, activities, places, times and actions.

In case the faculty member resists and fights back by denying, rejecting and attacking, the department chair should keep a positive and supportive attitude. The chair should stay focused on the objective, recognise and understand the faculty member's rejection and criticism, identify the faculty member's positive aspects, use a relaxed, calm voice, and never argues, denies or defends.

Before deciding upon any disciplinary action, the department chair should copy the relevant policies, rules, procedures and standards, and present these to the faculty member orally and in writing. When enforcing the rules, the department chair should know if the same rules apply throughout the university and are enforced in the same way for similar, previous offences. Also, the chair should gather all of the facts before analysing the case, giving prior warning orally or in writing, and recording actions, dates and times.

Before reaching a decision, the department chair should examine the disciplinary record of the faculty member in the past, the amount of punishment compared to the seriousness of the offence, consider alternative actions for the faculty member, and seek a suspension to review the facts.

Faculty members should be aware of the policies, procedures and standards that result in disciplinary actions. The department chair should ensure that faculty know the rules, train faculty on the policies and procedures, and test faculty's understanding. The consequences of a violation of the policies, procedures and standards must be clear and understood by the department chair and faculty members.

SUCCESS PREDICTION BEHAVIOURS

The department chair focuses upon the success of faculty and administration, and is the person trusted to convey problems from the department to the administration staff to seek a solution. However, for personal success, the chair has to have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the subjects that he/she deals with and to perform quality work that has high standards of performance [21][22]. Then, the self-assurance and confidence of the department chair will be owned. The chair will be able to admit mistakes or identify any lack of certain subjects, while at the same time, be able to invite and accept feedback without rejecting faculty by judging, accusing and demeaning.

The success of the department chair will require abilities in communicating clear instructions, in keeping faculty members well informed, in careful and attentive listening to faculty members' problems, and in helping to find solutions. This requires the department chair to take time to listen to faculty members when needed in order to ease tension and obtain cooperation. The chair should also maintain a friendly level of behaviour with faculty while continuing to be respected.

One of the main goals of the department chair is to build faculty members' self-esteem by praising and recognising them when they deserve it, to exercise fairness and avoid favouritism, while also displaying mature and academic behaviour consistently.

Many studies have been made with regard to managerial success and the personality type required in order to make a successful manager. Properties of successful managers includes offering careful behaviour that is different and distinctive from others, there also needs to be a willingness to take charge and control of situations, people and financial matters. Furthermore, people who make successful managers want to have visibility, willingness and a desire to have authority and power over others, and take risks in performing in an organisation.

Department chairs who are responsible for managing their faculty respect the rules of the university and the administration, have a responsibility in carrying out not only routine work but work on the details, and invite favourable comments for their efforts and results. At the same time, they have to handle situations by addressing challenges from supervisors, peers and subordinates, while also being ready to compete with peers without rewards, and demonstrate managerial competence.

Department chairs who deal with their faculty are usually unwilling to take actions against faculty members. This behaviour is due to the fact that department chairs do not find support from administration in applying strict rules to faculty members. Most of the time, they do not have great expectations for themselves; they want to maintain popularity and friendships, and seek to act the same as their peers who do not reinforce strict rules.

The application of discipline is not something that department chairs like to get involved in higher education. They expect that faculty members, after a long period in the university environment, have developed acceptable styles of behaviours. Especially when faculty members work individually or in teams, department chairs expect mature and sincere behaviour that is predictable, productive, with no problems for the department chair, other faculty members or the university.

Since the centre of interest in education is the student and his/her learning, any disciplinary action that is directed towards faculty members include the prevention of bad behaviour. This means focusing on actions and not the person, developing faculty members and speaking for the future, while also maintaining fair behaviour and handling situations privately.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions drawn from this article on interpersonal skills to develop engineering faculty is that the department chair has to be prepared and know the skills needed to reach his/her goals in order to be successful.

The department chair should also have an understanding of his/her function, learn to address difficult situations and accept the role of the chair and faculty members. The chair should prepare an activities schedule that includes goals and activities planning, and gain the agreement of faculty members. The chair should develop leadership skills by practicing different behavioural styles and have the flexibility to adjust his/her style to faculty needs.

The department chair should have the ability to listen, handle distractions, understand, restate and summarise. The role requires being able to motivate and exhibit coaching skills, set rewarding rules for faculty performance, observe and improve performance. The chair should be able to delegate authority to faculty members, define relevant projects and requirements, evaluate resistance, and demand high expectations. The chair should create a positive climate in the department by expecting quality performance, facing negative feelings and giving positive solutions to negative behaviours.

The department chair should prepare an action plan, and consider any environmental factors when a faculty member displays an unwillingness to perform well. The chair should apply problem-solving techniques, face those faculty members who create problems and learn the sequence of taking action. The department chair should also know what the success prediction rules are, learn to supervise faculty members, control everyday work and successfully perform tasks expected in the role.

REFERENCES

1. Turner, D., *60 Role Plays for Management and Supervisory Training*. New York: McGraw-Hill (1996).
2. Rothwell, W.J., *Workplace Learning and Performance Roles: the Manager and the Change Leader*. Alexandria: American Society for Training & Development (2001).
3. Schiavone, P., *Engineering Success*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall (1999).
4. Schein, E.H., *Career Survival: Strategic Job and Role Planning*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer & Co. (1994).
5. Lewis, J.P., *Project Planning, Scheduling and Control.* New York: McGraw-Hill (2000).
6. Dilts, R.B., *Visionary Leadership Skills: Creating a World to Which People Want to Belong*. Capitola: Meta Publications (1996).
7. Daresh, J.C., *Marketing Your Educational Leadership Skills: How to Land the Job you Want*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press (2002).
8. Reed, W.H., *Positive Listening: Learning to Hear What People are Really Saying*. New York: Franklin Watts (1985).
9. Floyd, J., *Improving Listening Abilities*. Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 140 (1998).
10. Thomas, K.W., *Intrinsic Motivation at Work: Building Energy and Commitment*. Williston: Berrett-Koehler (2003).
11. Fournies, F.F., *Coaching for Improved Work Performance.* New York: McGraw-Hill (1999).
12. Whitmore, J., *Coaching for Performance: Growing People, Performance and Purpose*. Yarmouth: Nicholas Brealey Publishing (2002).
13. Nelson, R.B., *Empowering Employees through Delegation*. New York: McGraw-Hill (1993).
14. Huppe, F.F., *Successful Delegation: How to Grow Your People, Build Your Team, Free Up Your Time and Increase Profits and Productivity.* Franklin Lakes: Career Press (1994).
15. Erickson, F.J., McEvoy, A.W. and Brookover, W.B., *Creating Effective Schools: An Inservice Program for Enhancing School Learning Climate and Achievement.* Holmes Beach: Learning Publications (1996).
16. Freiberg, H.J., *School Climate: Measuring, Improving and Sustaining Healthy Learning Environment.* New York: Routledge Falmer (1999).
17. Marzano, R.J., Pollock, J.E. and Pickering, D.J., *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement.* Alexandria: Assoc. for Supervision and Curriculum Development (2001).
18. Cooper, D. and Kiger, N.D., *Literacy Assessment: Helping Teachers Plan Instruction*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin College (2001).
19. Higgins, J.M., *101 Creative Problem Solving Techniques: the Handbook of New Ideas for Business.* Winter Lakes: New Management Publishing Co. (1994).
20. Martella, R.C., Nelson, J.R., Marchand-Martella, N.E. and Nelson, R., *Managing Disruptive Behaviors in the Schools: a Schoolwide, Classroom, and Individualized Social Learning Approach.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon (2002).
21. Tucker, M.S. and Codding, J.B., *Standards for Our Schools: How to Set Them, Measure Them, and Reach Them*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (1998).
22. Alderman, M.K., *Motivation for Achievement: Possibilities for Teaching and Learning*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum & Assoc. (1999).