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# Minding the Mission: Succession Planning for Academic Leadership at Christian Institutions

Emily A. Hunt

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MINDING THE MISSION: SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR ACADEMIC  
LEADERSHIP AT CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS

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A thesis

Presented to

The School of Graduate Studies

Department of Higher Education and Student Development

Taylor University

Upland, Indiana

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Higher Education and Student Development

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by

Emily A. Hunt

May 2009

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<p><b>Higher Education and Student Development</b>  <b>Taylor University</b>  <b>Upland, Indiana</b></p>
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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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MASTERS THESIS

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This is to certify that the Thesis of

Emily Alison Hunt

entitled

Minding the Mission: Succession Planning for Academic Leadership at Christian Institutions

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the  
Master of Arts degree

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## ABSTRACT

*Minding the Mission: Succession Planning for Academic Leadership at Christian Universities* was designed to determine the status of succession planning for academic leadership of those institutions holding membership in the Christian College Consortium (CCC). Nine Chief Academic Officers (CAO's) from CCC institutions were interviewed regarding the importance and status of succession planning for academic leadership at each of their respective institutions. This qualitative study utilized a grounded theory research methodology and sought to understand the: 1) level of institutional commitment, 2) identified impediments, and 3) viable opportunities associated with succession planning for academic leadership from the perspectives offered by the CAO's. The findings revealed that although CAO's valued the importance of and were personally committed to succession planning, no systematic approach or model was identified to guide the process within these institutions. Recommendations are made for Christian institutions based upon opportunities offered by the chief academic officers as well as a review of optimal models utilized in higher education. A sense of urgency comes from this research for Christian institutions to assess their current talent pool of potential academic leaders and to adopt both formal and informal approaches to succession planning provided in this study as they plan for the future.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research literature within higher education reveals the critical importance of identifying and appointing competent leaders who possess the capability to effectively administer university programs in ways that advance and sustain an institution's mission and purpose. When interviewed by Butterfield (2008), Davidson describes this need as a formidable challenge since,

“higher education is facing an aging population, increased demand for high productivity, demanding skill sets, gaps in the talent portfolio, and increasing costs for retaining skilled and committed faculty and staff-and all at a time of a declining supply” (p. 38).

Therefore it is critical that current governing boards and executive leadership teams make succession planning and talent management a high priority within their respective institutions. Though this daunting task may require a relentless and intentional investment of human and financial resources, Davidson also believes there is much potential within higher education for leveraging the culture to recruit, retain, and develop both faculty and staff for the future (Butterfield, 2008).

According to Davies (2007), succession planning is specifically about ensuring that individuals are prepared to lead in ways which are contextually both sensitive and

responsive. It is critical that academic institutions take seriously the pursuit of ensuring sustainability of leadership or face the deterioration of mission and other established initiatives. Higher education as a whole has taken special interest in succession planning as shown by many recent pursuits in this field of research.

### Why it Matters

The research shows an obvious need for strong academic leaders in organizations who are committed to creating the institutions next generation of leadership. This leadership is vital to the overall functioning and effectiveness of schools in the current higher education market. Most senior academic administrators were initially trained in a teaching discipline and received little management training for administrative roles (McDade, 1988). Not only do new academic officers find the need to develop different skill sets for their new positions, but also current senior academic officers have to continually develop and adapt their competencies (McDade). Also, Christian higher education institutions must examine their culture of leadership development and policies for succession planning. This assessment process can provide a basis for leadership succession to enter the conversation in order to enhance the current environment of the institution and ultimately maintain the historical faith and commitment through the development of future leaders.

### Christian Colleges and Universities

If succession planning and talent management is essential across the larger spectrum of higher education, this initiative becomes even more critical for sustaining the microcosm of faith-based institutions who embrace a distinct devotion to their Christian heritage. To disregard the need for progressive thinking and succession planning would

be to the detriment of the faith-based institution as well as their intended outcomes and societal purposes. Specifically in faith-based institutions there is an added element of stewardship at work with regard to the need for succession planning. Not only do members of a Christian community strive to better themselves in pursuit of Christ but they also realize the need for diligence in stewarding both scarce resources as well as the mission.

Though broad in scope and definition, a Christian institution can be characterized by the specific integration and synthesis of faith in Christ with the learning process. Not only is hiring well important for sustainability of this Christian distinction, but also important is recruiting and developing prospective leaders. When discussing potential slippery slope for Christian colleges, Adrian as cited in Hughes and Adrian (1997) concludes that the religious character of an institution is ultimately played out by its personnel. According to Ringenberg (1996), one mark of a decidedly Christian college is a clear faculty-hiring policy that invites Christian and intellectual commitment simultaneously. Minding the mission must be an integral component of all Christian Colleges in ways that will enable their Christian distinctive to be sustained. Duane Litfin (2004) concludes in *Conceiving a Christian College* that each institution retains a specific identity that has existed for longer than the current members of the community. He goes on to state that leaders must make intentional plans for leadership succession if they are serious about maintaining their unique identity. “The institution must be able to outlive succeeding generations of its own members in such a way that after they have come and gone the institution remains intact, identifiably the same school” (p. 223).

To disregard planning for the future could not only result in a blurred vision, but perhaps even a drift to a more secular status. Hamilton (2005) explains that Christian colleges and universities are on the edge, or slippery slope, of secularism at any given moment. “Apostasy” is the outcome if small concessions are continually made regarding anything sacred to mission and vision (para.4). In the conclusion of this work, Adrian (1997) poses that while Christian institutions have become major players in the larger context of higher education, “their best years and most profound contributions may still lie in the future” (p. 455). It is of utmost importance for Christian institutions to take seriously the need to prepare qualified leaders who are capable of carrying out unique institutional missions.

This specific study has been designed to assess the current status of succession planning and talent management in nine of thirteen faith-based institutions who hold membership in the Christian College Consortium (CCC). According to their mission statement, the selected institutions were granted membership based upon quality of their program, commitment to protestant, evangelical heritage, and geographical presence ([www.cconsortium.org](http://www.cconsortium.org)). It is imperative that these institutions embody a commitment to vibrant leadership while maintaining a Christian heritage and vision.

#### Research Question

The research question created for this study was, “What is the status of succession planning for academic leadership within the Christian College Consortium?” Succession planning for the purposes of this research study was operationally defined for the participants as proactively thinking about, and taking action towards the next phase of academic leadership within their institution.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### The Importance of Academic Leadership

A recent comparative study in of the profiles of Chief Academic Officers in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) resulted in a specific call to more assessment of these positions while also highlighting the need for them to be filled. The purpose of the study was to develop a profile of those in the position, compare them to other CAO's at non-CCCCU schools, and then to identify implications of each of the CAO's career experience and demographics for CCCCU presidential openings. According to the results, the "CAO is a vital position in Christian higher education organizations. Not only is this position important for the overarching institutional program, but also because it is often a role assumed by people who will later take on the position of president. Both of these are of utmost importance and indicate the need for additional studies regarding the actual CAO position" (Cedja, Bush, and Rewey, 2002, p. 15). Another study found that 22.4% of the participants reported that the CAO position was the one held prior to their appointment to the Presidency. (Lumsden, Plotts, Wells, & Newsom, 2000, table 3). Therefore, it's important to examine the preparation of CAO 's as they frequently advance and serve as CEO's. Cedja recommended that further

qualitative research be conducted in order to better prepare plans for the recruitment and development of presidents.

### Importance of Succession Plans for Academic Leadership

#### *Cutting Edge Institutions*

The Academic Quality Improvement program has identified foresight as a characteristic of high performance higher education institutions. Institutions that focus on foresight will be more capable of predicting and anticipating changes that will occur within the environment and organizational structure ([www.aqip.org](http://www.aqip.org)). Therefore when institutions institute succession plans and developing future academic leaders that are taking steps that reflect they are serious about sustaining their institutional mission and purpose into the future.

#### *The Urgent Need for Planning*

External competition poses a major threat to small Christian institutions. (Burkgren & Halladay, 2007). This is compounded by the need to replace an aging cadre of academic leaders. Many of these leaders who have fulfilled their roles in a dedicated manner will become eligible for retirement within the next ten years. (Burkgren & Halladay, 2007). Developing plans for the replacement of current academic leaders was also found to be a problem in major Land Grant Universities (Bisbee & Miller, 2007). This study surveyed department chairs, associate deans, deans and provosts and less than half of the schools reported the existence of and support for systematic plans for leadership development. The major recommendation of this study was the challenge for academia to develop programs that will prepare leaders who are capable of advancing the academic goals of the institution at a high level. Another study of 250 CAO's of

independent colleges and universities found that by the year 2015, 58% of the CAO's will retire and by 2020, 84% will likely be retired (Breland, 2004).

*Diversity planning as a component of succession planning for academic leadership*

Diversity initiatives are at the forefront of planning for the majority of Christian colleges. A recent survey conducted by Witt/Keifer (2008), presented one challenge which was to balance succession planning with diversity goals. Across the board this includes diversity in race, ethnicity, and gender. Many institutions do not have a diverse work force from which to prepare diverse leaders, so the open search is their opportunity to attract diverse leaders and to make this a priority for strategic succession planning. Otherwise, the institution maintains the existing leadership profile.

**Hindrances to Succession Planning for Academic Leadership**

Witt/Kieffer, an executive search firm, conducted a survey of college and university presidents and board members in 2008 to determine barriers to leadership succession planning. Among top findings was that succession planning is limited to and mostly occurs only at the president/chancellor level. The respondents said, however, that they are most likely to expand this for senior administration, chief academic officers, and deans. They said that shared governance specifically represented a major challenge for this initiative to move forward as there is a lack of trust and also accountability in the process of preparing successors. Because of many unknowns within the process, it appears that transformative change of culture will be required in order for succession planning to be understood as critical for sustaining the mission and purposes of an institution

Another identified hindrance was faculty transitions to administrative positions. Achterberg (2004) gives ten reasons as to why making the move from faculty member to administrator is difficult, including, voice changes, working with staff, information management, longer work hours, public accountability, and new pressure points to name a few. In its department chair workshops, the American Council on Education gave a questionnaire to participants regarding their experience as a department chair primarily asking what had changed in their life after moving from a faculty member to a department chair position (Hecht, 1999, p. 1). Their responses fell into the categories of time, relationships, and personal change. “There is no denying that many chairs experience a sense of loss in their new role, particularly in the diminished ability to pursue their professional research (Hecht, p. 4).” Not only do faculty members not necessarily want the roles of administrators, but they are inadequately prepared to assume them. “Most [faculty] do not prepare for the position as part of graduate course work, since doctoral programs preparing faculty are generally limited to discipline specific topics rather than academic administrative issues” (Land, 2003, p. 13).

*Institutional Culture is Problematic for Succession Planning for Academic Leadership*

Academic institutions are cautious and concerned when the idea of succession planning is mentioned. Slow to adopt corporate management processes, institutions of higher learning often find any business concepts irrelevant to their current mission. “Succession planning is an especially difficult concept to apply in academia due to dramatic cultural differences between the boardroom and the campus” (Clunies, 2007, Para. 2). Higher education seems to regard with suspicion any attempts to implement business approaches to education, which is seen as an unrelated and irrelevant tactic. It

often appears that both churches and corporations are more proactive about succession planning than colleges or universities. Be that as it may there still can be applications which are of significant use. Specifically for Christian colleges, looking at the example of the church as an organization committed to succession planning is extremely beneficial. According to Orander (2005), “most churches understand the necessity of planning for successors, but many other non-profit types are not as aware.” There are obvious differences between the for-profit and non-profit sectors, but even among non-profits and entities of higher education there are vast differences. This has implications for how schools prepare for succession planning. While being similar in concept and general outcomes, every institution of higher education whether small or large has its own culture and organizational mechanisms. No one model is going to fit every institution as they develop their future leaders. This factor alone, combined with others make it problematic for academic institutions to adopt an intricately developed succession plan model. When looking at succession planning it is vital to have a broad understanding of academic culture. Does the type of culture have an effect on the lack of viable successors found in higher education for administrative tasks? Depending on the Carnegie classification, size, and organization of the institution, only a small number of leadership positions are available within a shared governance structure.

A collegial environment and flat administration as well as scarcity of resources is often characteristic of small institutions. According to Edwards (2008) of the University of Pennsylvania, a successful talent management strategy must compliment the vision and needs of the organization. She recommends employing creative approaches to develop and retain capable individuals who will excel within the organization (Edwards,

2008, p. 7). This is especially important for small institutions to consider. As these institutions that are often not focused on political movements and bureaucratic functions, hiring well is vital to ensuring institutional effectiveness and sustainable success. The right fit is very important, and a person's commitment to institutional mission and core values must be considered. Constituents will question even the best selection process. Transitions always seem to breed a sense of uncertainty within higher education institutions. Dowdall (2007) explains a few typical apprehensions, "Will the fit be as good as everyone hopes? Will the new person define a new institutional direction and new priorities? Will he or she clean house or move forward with the current leadership team? Will the necessary resources be assembled to carry out the mission and achieve the institutional aspirations?" (p. 153)

Clunies (2007) points out that plans of succession should be customized for an organization's needs (para.1). It can be difficult in smaller institutions to embrace the idea of a transparent process for transitions where participation from internal candidates is encouraged (Witt/Keifer, 2008). Institutional constituents can often feel out of the loop and are unaware of what is going on with regards to the process. Barden (2008) discusses the difficulties of internal versus external candidates as well as the intricacies of that process. It is possible that qualified candidates will exist internally, though institutions have no way of knowing how that candidate compares to the rest of the market without conducting a full-scale search. Search committees will spend massive amounts of money to affirm that the candidate down the hall is best qualified to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the position.

## Existing Models of Succession Planning in Higher Education

Limited research exists on the specific topic of succession planning for academic leadership. Though not specifically focused on CAO's, an investigative study on Chief Information Officers in higher education lead to the following conclusion, "There is no one-size-fits all approach to executive development at senior levels and therefore the program for a [CIO]-in-grooming is carefully crafted to the needs of the specific individual" (Boettcher & Craven, 2008, slide 37). This advocates a management of talent approach which is transferable to academic leadership. Results from this quantitative study of these CIO's and their successors revealed that talent identification, formal training, and on the job training were three elements of a good development training process. They also found that a tension exists in succession plans between being too person-specific or institutional-specific, and recommended a dualistic approach to talent management and succession planning.

Several exemplary models of leadership development exist in the literature designed to prepare future leaders within higher education institutions and are relevant to this study of preparing future academic leaders. From personal communication and recent journal articles the following institutions practices were observed:

### *The University of Pennsylvania*

The University of Pennsylvania has established an on-site development program called "Leadership@Penn" (Edwards, 2008). The goals are to, "provide the university with the leadership capability needed; make it increasingly successful in an ever-changing environment; support people in developing a broader understanding of Penn; create among participants a stronger identification with Penn, its mission and how people

contribute to the whole; and attract, develop and retain the talent needed to enhance the institution's success" (p. 4). There are multiple components of Penn's program, including the *Workshop Track*, the *Strategic Projects Track*, and the *Individual Development*. Each of these allows participants to connect and "develop a network to be more effective in their current roles" (p. 4). The outcomes focus on employee contribution and engagement, reduced turnover, and increased internal promotion. The University of Pennsylvania has paved the way for multiple models of succession planning. Some themes of their existing Center for Learning and Education, which facilitates the development process, are to identify and build on higher education leadership characteristics, present issue-based projects, and provide performance enhancing feedback (Butterfield, 2008, p. 38). Vice President for Human Resources at the University of Pennsylvania, Heuer (2008) conducted research regarding succession planning at ivy plus schools that provided a foundation and model for this study at CCC institutions.

#### *Cornell University*

Cornell University has established a fast track model to create sustainable leadership. Using the individual and the organizational path, they identify needs, opportunities and plans for each of the two groups. The proposed outcomes include job satisfaction, organizational sustainability and effectiveness, and successes. The blending of the two groups has been titled "people to purpose" and involves identifying best fits, developing the current employee, and mapping the best possible scenario for the synthesis of employees and institutional objectives (Burkgren & Halladay, 2007).

#### *The University of Minnesota*

The University of Minnesota noted that to achieve organizational success, it was imperative to invest in leadership competency modeling, performance feedback, and development support in collaboration with university executives (Butterfield p.37). This commitment initiated with twenty- four (24) interviews of deans that focused on identifying “UM-specific leadership and role-based competencies that contribute to organizational success” (p. 38). The hope was that this initiative would help to define competency models in UM campus-appropriate language and build these expectations into evaluation processes. The next step is to emphasize the readiness of internal candidates for promotion. A human resources talent management team and a group of 5 dean advisors supervise the current project (p. 38).

#### *The University of Michigan*

After assessing their status, the University of Michigan’s research regarding this issue brought up noticeable and significant increases in leadership and employee turnover (Butterfield, 2008).The losses are attributed in part to a lack of opportunity for meaningful organizational contribution or professional growth. In response to this information, the University of Michigan has developed initiatives to discuss knowledge transfer support, and the necessity to invest in a portfolio management project that would focus on competencies that aid successful achievement within the institution and beyond.

#### Other models and assessment techniques for succession planning

Capelli (2008) presents a for-profit model in the Harvard Business Review and advocates a revision in terminology from succession planning to talent management. Capelli agrees that the problem of succession planning has been stated, but the solution may not be as easy as it was in the 1950’s to create a “long term succession plan that

attempts to map out careers years into the future” (p. 2). This information is relevant for both the for-profit and non-profit sectors. There is a generational gap that evokes the current and developing workforce with unfocused career plans and a sporadic choice of jobs and paths. There is no guarantee that the “groomed successors” will not leave during this waiting period. Capelli said that although a vacancy may occur, perhaps the previously identified candidate no longer meets the now current needs of the job as they once did. Though these internal candidates may have been identified by a laid out succession plan, the company can still look externally. When this occurs it can be more problematic than having no plan at all, according to Capelli, because the candidates can feel betrayed and out of the loop. He lists the following problems associated with succession planning initially including: “...Succession plans create an implicit promise..Second, investments in developing these candidates are essentially wasted. Third, most companies now have to update their succession plans every year as jobs change and individuals leave, wasting tremendous amounts of time and energy” (p. 3).

The theory of “Talent Management” as opposed to succession planning exists to “support the organization’s overall objectives” (p. 3). Heur (2008) agrees with this difference in semantics, even after researching administrative succession planning at Ivy League institutions. “...It was clear in the research and its practical application that colleges/universities are not structured for true succession activity” (personal communication). He preferred a more loose terminology such as “broad based succession planning” which implies creating a succession group, but without a specific or pre-organized role for them. Again though, this depends on the context and the institutional make-up. Both leadership development and talent management allow for a wider scope of

planning and could be utilized as they reflect the need to help all people learn new skills and ideas (Andringa, 2008, personal communication).

#### Development Opportunities for Academic Leadership of Christian Institutions

Certain opportunities are regularly offered by the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) and Council of Independent Colleges (CIC). There are two specific leadership initiatives of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU) related to academic leadership development. These include: The Leadership Development Institute and The Women's Leadership Development Institute.

Both initiatives were established to provide external leadership development opportunities for mid-level personnel currently serving in higher education academic roles. The main purpose of the institutes is to identify and develop future administrators and leaders within Christian higher education institutions. Both of these leadership development institutes cater specifically towards future CAO's and Presidents. The institutes consists of a group of participants attending summer training together followed by a year long process of shadowing administrators from other CCCU institutions. Also, participants complete assigned readings, write reflective papers, and create a professional development plan. Not only are these important times to learn within a peer group, but also to establish a network of administrators and develop relationships with like-minded individuals within CCC institutions ([www.cccu.org](http://www.cccu.org)).

The Council for Independent Colleges has established two programs that prepare future academic leaders. The *Academic Leadership for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* is a year-long program consisting of seminars readings, and programs specifically for CAO's. The process is designed to give CAO's experience related to the Presidential role. Another

opportunity is the Department Chair Training Program that includes a series of intensive summer workshops created specifically to strengthen the leadership capacity of department and division chairs in small private institutions..

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODS

The goal of this study was to evaluate the status of succession planning at similar faith-based institutions of higher education, specifically those in the Christian College Consortium. The literature review informed the development of questions relevant to succession planning for academic leaders within small, Christian institutions who hold membership within the Consortium of Christian Colleges. This study of multiple institutions utilized a grounded theory as the primary method of research to explain how and the extent of succession planning for academic leadership within the selected group and sought to develop a model schema of a certain process or experience that was occurring. Specifically this method enables the researcher to make meaning and build a theory from the data collected. In this study, the CAO responses provided the data and themes from which a theory was developed.

This qualitative study provides a model upon which to base experiences of Chief Academic Officers. Qualitative methods were helpful because there was no model or quantitative instrument to utilize for research regarding this topic pertaining to this specific population. According to Creswell (2007), “Participants in the study would have all experienced the process and the development of the theory might help explain practice or provide a framework for further research” (p. 63). Each of the CCC Chief academic

officers have experienced succession planning at their own institutions. In an attempt to qualify why this process occurs and in what format it occurs, the grounded theory is the most appropriate method. The methodology included the following components that were completed in a linear format.

1. Development of instrument/questions
2. Invitation and selection of participants
3. Pilot test conducted for interview protocol effectiveness
4. Participants interviewed and responses audio recorded
5. Interview conversations transcribed
6. Transcriptions coded for major and minor themes
7. Participant review of transcription
8. Peer review of codes and themes
9. Results analyzed and reported.

#### Development of Instrument/Questions

The instrument was created to gain an overview of processes occurring at CCC institutions related to succession planning with the assumption that no formalized plans had been developed. The format of questions allowed the participants to become familiar with the topic as they thought about the informal and formal ways that academic leadership development occurred within their institution.

#### Invitation and Selection of Participants

The typical career path of a Chief Academic Officer would normally involve the following positions in chronological order: faculty member, department chair, dean, then VP or Chief academic officer (Land, 2003, p. 14). Purposeful sampling was used to select

the CCC CAO's due to access as well as interest. Because these institutions share similar size, mission, and structure, it was most effective to interview many of these in the same consortium rather than conduct an in depth study within a single institution. All thirteen of the CCC CAO's were invited to participate in the study and nine agreed to do so. The Taylor University Provost was excluded as a member of the research population to avoid a conflict of interest in the process. The primary rationale for interviewing CAO's was their knowledge, experience and responsibility for hiring academic leaders at their respective institutions. Although the participants sometimes are viewed as competitors, each CAO was cooperative and provided relevant information for the purposes of the study.

A brief description of the study was prepared and described in the letter of invitation (see appendix A). The letters were personally delivered to the CAO's at the CAO Council of Independent Colleges conference in November of 2008. The majority of the desired population was in attendance. Those who were not in attendance received their letter of invitation via U.S. Mail. The letter informed the CAO's that a follow up e-mail would be sent within a week to confirm their willingness to participate in the study. Upon securing an affirmative response, an interview date and time was then arranged. Access to the CCC CAO's was provided by the Taylor University provost.

#### Pilot Test

The Interview process was pilot tested with the Taylor University provost to ensure protocol effectiveness (See Appendix B). Based on the pilot test minor improvements and alterations were made to the interview questions (See Appendix C).

### Participants Interviewed

The interviewer must be open to whatever the participant may say and not ask leading questions in order to evoke a certain response (Warren, 2001, p. 83). The phone interview was selected as the primary form of data collection due to the fact that the participants were serving in institutions located between the east and west coasts. The week of the interview the participants received a list of the questions that they would be asked in the interview so they could be prepared in advance with their responses to discuss the specific topics being addressed. The principle researcher conducted a thirty minute interview using an interview protocol with each chief academic officers of the nine institutions that agreed to participate.

These interviews were each conducted over the telephone using a speaker option and were then recorded onto an audio recorder. The interview questions were open ended, but the same format was used for each CAO. There was time at the end of each interview for the CAO to discuss other relevant questions they wanted the study to address. A document of informed consent was provided to the participants via email and they gave verbal consent to this agreement prior to the interview taking place (Appendix D). The names of participants and institutions were kept confidential in the report as the data was aggregated. No references were made to specific people, places, or institutions. Immediately after the interview, there was a brief session of follow up to clarify any communication errors during the conversation.

### Interview Transcription

After each interview, the audio data was transcribed into written data to prepare for further analysis.

### Coding and Theme Organization

A data organizing system was developed that allowed a visible comparison chart of the themes and organization of the information. After coding, the data was grouped into main themes and concepts according to each question. The process of open coding to determine main points and ideas from each statement made by the participant began. I determined from each line of script the main points attempting to be shared. It was imperative that a systematic procedure be established where in order to coherently develop the theory that explained the “ process, action, or interaction on the topic” (Creswell, 2007 p. 64). The transcriptions were assessed using the process of open coding, where the researcher codes “the data for its major categories of information” (Creswell, 2007, p. 64). The next step was axial coding in which the researcher “creates categories around a core phenomenon” then selective coding occurs where small propositions or hypotheses are created that help the story or process make sense (p. 65). Finally the main concepts and themes that emerged were analyzed and provided as results of the study.

### Member-checking and Peer-review

According to Creswell (2003), qualitative research is generally more interpretive from a holistic perspective. Because validation of the data was imperative, certain strategies were employed to protect the information. Prior to compiling the results, the participant received their preliminary synthesized responses to the interview questions.

The member checking process involved sending the themes back to the CAO's to be analyzed and evaluated if necessary. No changes were made based on this process which proves the general validity of the study. This was a continuation of the iterative process that began with the interviews.

Creswell (2003) advocates a “cycling back and forth from data collection and analysis.” This process allowed for high quality interpretation of the data, which will build the credibility of the study (p. 181). Any relevant discrepant information was presented in the thesis as an outlier from the norm. This is another form of validation. Also a neutral reviewer was asked to review the codes related to the transcriptions in the format of peer review to ensure validity. General limitations of qualitative research were present including the fact that this was an exploratory study which involved making meaning out of each institution's nuanced processes.

### Reporting Results

The results of the study were organized in chart form according to the most frequently selected themes.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### Impediments to Succession Planning for Academic Leadership

When asked about the major impediments to succession planning, 66% of the participants responded that a lack of sufficient financial resources was the primary roadblock at their institution. One CAO stated that there was not, “sufficient bank for buck,” at Christian College Consortium institutions to have an elaborate plan. Others agreed that a lack of financial resources makes it hard to do anything formal, specifically regarding external development or hybrid positions. Not being able to afford assistant deans or simply add extra “deans in training” results in limited opportunity to “cross train” and provide “on the job” training that will help prepare future academic leaders.

Also, the lack of opportunities for upward mobility due to the limited number of academic administrative positions within small faith based institutions was another pervasive response of CAO’s. Therefore, talented prospective administrators who aspired to leadership roles left their own institution to do so. CAO’s were reluctant to invest scarce institutional dollars in leadership development programs that prepared leaders for competitive institutions.

Institutional turnover was another widely stated impediment. When transitions in senior leadership occur changes in CAO’s are likely to occur that often negatively impact CAO’s and create institutional instability for a season. The CAO’s stated that they

served at “the mercy of the next President. One CAO stated that the grooming of prospective CAO’s could be worthless if the president was not committed to continuing the process. CAO responses also reflected the challenges associated with the changes in priorities that accompany changes in presidents. The idea of creating a lame-duck administrator was also perceived as a drawback to succession planning. Though it is often the “elephant in the room,” there is resistance to talking about the next leader publicly because many questions of restructuring come up when you talk about the future.”

Over 50% of the CAO’s described the faculty as generally unwilling to pursue administrative positions or become involved in leadership training programs. Many stories were shared about faculty members who they encouraged to become involved in leadership development opportunities who never took advantage of the opportunity given to do so. One participant stated this was problematic because the best teachers and the best scholars are also the best administrators

Other impediments were identified, including:

1. A lack of a champion pursuing succession planning at the institution.
2. Institutions identifying individuals who do not fully understand the mission and vision.
3. Little emphasis or discussion regarding succession planning and the lack of well-developed models among CCC institutions.
4. Balancing work and life is seen as more problematic for administrators and discourages promising leaders from seeking administrative roles.
5. More professors of an earlier generation were apt to see institutional service as important.

6. A diminishing number of faculty members see administrative roles as a calling.

Table 1. *Impediments to succession planning by institution*

Institution	Lack of Resources	Limited upward mobility	Institutional turnover	Faculty apprehension
1	X			
2		X	X	X
3	X	X		
4	X	X		X
5	X	X	X	X
6			X	
7	X		X	X
8				
9	X			X

#### Leadership Competencies

The most noted competency for leaders expressed by the CAOs was the need to view decision-making from a broad institutional perspective rather than only one that was departmentally focused. This narrow viewpoint is the most problematic characteristic for current academic leaders. It was stated that a well qualified prospective leader would be able to support the entire program and view problems holistically. Over 50% of the participants mentioned that interpersonal skills to build bridges and navigate through the institution were very important. They must have resolve to assess the climate of the institution, make decisions and motivate people. Other mentioned competencies included: innovation, emotional intelligence, and the ability to work within a shared governance environment. 33% of the participants specifically were interested in bringing in women or person's of color for their institution as this was an area where they were lacking.

Though not truly a competency, in responding they mentioned this as an actual competency for the next leadership pool.

Other competencies mentioned:

1. Increased numbers of underrepresented populations.
2. Demonstrated leadership effectiveness

Table 2. *leadership competencies*

Institution	Broad Perspective of the Institution	Interpersonal skills	Resolve and vision
1	X	X	X
2	X	X	X
3			
4			
5		X	X
6	X	X	
7	X	X	X
8	X		
9	X		

### Appointing and Identifying Candidates

Over fifty percent of the CAO participants initially stated that no formal institutional plans existed for identifying or appointing those who would fill academic leadership in the near future. The responses were different per each of the positions (whether department chair, dean, or VP) as to the processes involved for identifying candidates. Either an institution valued highly their own people being developed, or on the opposite end the rest of the institutions valued more the new and innovative ideas from external candidates.

The CAO's stated that while it is mostly appreciated when candidates seek positions of leadership on their own, there were apprehensions about some who self-

identified. The process of self-selection had the capacity to be a positive step for the institution when well-qualified individuals identify their desire for administration. However, when individuals did not possess the inherent capacity for administration, it was deemed unfortunate and difficult to address when the wrong people self-identified for positions. Because there was no clear or formal process in place for these administrative capacities to be developed and recognized, some CAO's found themselves hoping certain people would not apply for administrative leadership roles. 100% of the CAO's believed that hiring mission-fit candidates was imperative in order to avoid appointing leaders who could take the institution in the wrong direction and away from the mission and core values. Each person who commented regarding this topic agreed that this aspiration was wonderful and terrible, dependent upon who was identifying themselves. Sometimes the self-disclosure of interest was overtly discussed while other times faculty members passively advocated their wishes. One CAO commented that, "we have a short-list of people who would be a train wreck if they became a department chair." Another said that, "self-declaration is scary."

The majority of the CAO's agreed that they consistently informally assessed their current faculty populations for prospective leadership candidates as well as those who give evidence of assuming administration. 78% of the participants agreed that many candidates were identified through informal conversations, encouragement, and how successful the person was in their current position. Giving out administrative projects, tasks, and initiatives was seen as helpful in identifying individuals who are able to perform well before given consideration for a dean or vp level position of administration.

CAO's reported that networking among other CCC and CCCU institutions was a major strategy for appointing external candidates for academic leadership. Informal conversations within CCC leadership in particular seemed to fit many of the models exhibited by the CAO's in CCC institutions as they identified potential external candidates to fill gaps in academic leadership. Most of the CAO's would rather have someone they know recommend potential candidates as opposed to conducting an open search of unknown candidates.

When evaluating prospective candidates to appoint to department or school leadership positions, the Chief Academic Officers noted that it was imperative to consider the institution's goals as well as the candidate's personal and professional goals. CAO's noted there was often much discrepancy between the two, specifically for women in the field.

Other methods of appointing and identifying potential candidates for academic leadership:

1. Good leaders simply rise to the top
2. National searches are important because of due diligence in the process.

Table 3. *appointing and identifying candidates*

Institution	No Formal plans exist	Position-specific processes	Informal review	Internal administrative opportunities	Self-identification
1	X	X	X	X	X
2	X		X	X	X
3	X				
4	X	X			
5		X	X		
6		X			
7		X		X	X
8		X			
9	X	X		X	

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### External and Internal Candidates

The analysis of data revealed the CAO's from denominationally affiliated institutions believed it took more time and effort for new leaders to understand institutional culture than did CAO's from independent institutions. 100% of the participants agreed that external candidates lack an understanding of the culture, context, or how things run. Internal candidates know the personality, landscape, and habits of the institution. There were benefits seen to both of these talent pools. Multiple CAO's stated the need for a good institutional profile, as well as a good orientation and assimilation process. Most department chairs were appointed inside the institution while deans and above were external searches. External searches were deemed costly financially as well as emotionally. One CAO responded that, "internal candidates are solving yesterday's problems rather than creating today's opportunities and that they must weigh the options and feel the needs of the institution at that moment in time."

Table 4. *external and internal Candidates*

Institution	External candidates bring a fresh perspective	Internal candidates mind the mission
1	X	X
2		
3		
4		X
5	X	X
6		
7	X	
8		
9	X	X

### Development Opportunities

One CAO mentioned that it was important to manage the actual transition time well. That is when the institution is proactive about transferring the knowledge base to the incoming candidate. In spite of the fact that a great candidate from a search may be available, the transition time can last from 1-2 years overall. The CAO participants noted that new projects and programs should be utilized to maximize and enhance a person's skills. One CAO noted that good leadership development may mean allowing a person the opportunity to leave because ultimately they are committed to the individual. The administrators agreed that they often have to make judgment calls for scarce professional development resources and ultimately commit those to the most viable candidates who give evidence of leadership qualities needed in the future.

Reading books together, committee work, hybrid positions, and scripture study were opportunities were mentioned by the participants as useful for informal development by the CAO for current or viable academic leaders. Informal conversations of encouragement were also seen as a proactive step towards better development. Useful opportunities for formal development included the annual CCCU Leadership Development Institute, Women's Leadership Development Institute, as well as the regional CIC department chair conference

Table 5. *development opportunities*

Institution	CCCU LDI/WLDI	CIC Department Chair conference	Hybrid Positions	Committee work
1	X		X	
2	X			X
3	X	X		
4	X	X		X
5	X	X		X
6	X	X		X
7		X		
8	X			X
9			X	X

### Opportunities for Succession Planning

The CAO's were provided an opportunity to respond to an open-ended question regarding academic succession planning. The participant responses could be creative or institutionally specific. Though more theoretical in nature, one opportunity mentioned was that CAO's would have a better understanding of the problem that exists with regards to a lack of succession planning. The majority of the CAO participants mentioned that this idea of succession planning was a timely topic and of specific interest to them. One stated that a large concern is "finding leaders who are sufficiently capable to handle the key challenges facing higher education today during uncertain economic times, limited financial resources, and external competition." Another participant focused on the major changes in Christian higher education leadership in the last twenty years and the need to leverage the change towards opportunity. Because, as one CAO said, "different generations have different assumptions, expectations, goals, concerns, and objectives, finding ways to synthesize these spectrum groups into focus is an opportunity."

When asked to list major opportunities for succession planning, multiple CAO's stated that the opportunity must start at the highest level of institutional leadership. It

must be a priority for the governing body of the institution and the executive leadership. CAO's mentioned that succession planning involves numerous university resources and constituencies and if it is to have any credibility it must be endorsed and supported at the board level.

Some institutions were in the process of developing a new school structure. Each of these schools agreed that this process was a great way to facilitate succession planning. Restructuring, by one CAO, was seen to be affected by mission and vision and also helped to determine the number of positions that are available. The need to strategically plan and evaluate throughout the whole re-structuring process provided three or more of the CAO's with the foundation needed as they planned for the future academic leadership appointments. Along this same idea, one CAO discussed the need to align people with new initiatives. 50% of the participants mentioned that hybrid positions were tremendously beneficial to prepare a candidate for an administrative position in academic leadership. Implementing these administrative training opportunities would give half time teaching loads and half time administrative roles to faculty members. The availability of these positions depends on financial stability as well as on the institutional needs. Interim positions were also seen as extremely helpful when one wanted to make structural changes but did not want to hastily hire. Regarding these interim positions, another CAO mentioned that they were a benefit in helping faculty realize whether or not administrative academic leadership was a good fit for them personally.

Developing partnerships was a theme that was revealed in the data analysis. Some CAO's thought that cross fertilization between institutions was beneficial for succession planning while others thought that it was best to always train in house and to keep good

people at your own institution. Opportunities for collaborative partnerships were mentioned with the idea to synthesize initiatives with other CCCU schools. One CAO mentioned the idea of hosting a conference specifically regarding succession planning for other schools and wondered how well-received this would be. Another CAO commented that, “ambition should not be viewed negatively,” as they advocated a safe environment within the institution to talk about career goals and motivations. The CAO’s saw some benefit to an avenue for combining best practices where a sense of accountability and collaboration could be implemented.

For deans and departments chairs, the CAO’s believed it was vital to strengthen the performance evaluations in order to identify the “next-in-line leaders.” Multiple participants cited the implementation of a faculty orientation process as detrimental to the process of succession planning. One idea was to develop a professional game-plan to help narrow the focus and engage the idea of institutional service from the very beginning of a new employee’s term. Another CAO mentioned the need to identify the current talent gaps, or those that will be apparent in the near future.

Other opportunities for succession planning include:

1. Institutions must answer the inter-generational question because different generations have different goals, expectations, and concerns.
2. Be upfront and honest with people
3. Give faculty options
4. Deans should work with new faculty to develop a professional game-plan to help narrow the focus and engage the idea of institutional service right from the beginning.

Table 6. *opportunities for succession planning*

Institution	Must be a board agenda	Leverage the restructuring process	Align new people with new initiatives	Develop strategic partnerships
1				X
2		X	X	
3				
4				X
5	X			X
6	X	X	X	
7				
8		X		
9				

## CHAPTER 5

## DISCUSSION

## Analysis of Results

According to the CAO's who participated in this study, succession planning for academic leadership was seen as an important and essential strategy for advancing and sustaining the mission and vision of faith-based institutions. They agreed there is a need for more formalized initiatives which encompass management of the current talent pool and that also provide direction for the future needs of the institution. The CAO's keen interest in participating in the study revealed the timely opportunity that exists for more research to occur with regard to succession planning. The majority of the conversations occurred with the understanding that while succession planning is a best practice, a formalized model was not fully present in Christian higher education. Each CAO saw extensive impediments to succession planning at CCC institutions, but also were quick to offer new strategies and ideas for enhanced practices of talent management.

The interviews with nine CAO's of CCC institutions were consistent to reveal a formal internal model that prepares future academic leaders. No models or initiatives that encompassed the nature of succession planning were available in the participating institutions. There were elements of succession planning that emerged, but not a comprehensive approach. External faculty development programs appear to be a valuable strategy of identifying, preparing, and appointing new academic leaders and improving the number of qualified individuals, including representatives from underrepresented population groups (i.e. persons of color and women). The results are discussed in the order they were previously presented by showing impediments to succession planning experienced in CCC institutions, the competencies needed for academic leadership, how the CAO's went about identifying and appointing candidates whether they be internal or

external, an explanation of faculty development best practices, and the opportunities for succession planning.

#### Impediments to Succession Planning for Academic Leadership

The literature on succession planning identified the need for intentional succession planning. The CAO interviews were in agreement with this focus. The discussion of impediments often began with the fact that succession planning itself is not a regularly mentioned topic. This lack of discussion inhibits the probability for succession planning to occur even if it considered a timely topic. A lack of sufficient resources, increasing institutional turnover and limited upward mobility were the most frequently mentioned roadblocks in the study. Other secondary impediments included the fact that faculty members do not often desire to be in administrative positions that are time consuming and viewed as pressure-inducing roles. Also, multiple CAO's had stories they shared regarding faculty members or department chairs they thought would be good candidates for a dean level and had spent resources developing, but that person ultimately decided not to pursue the leadership position.

#### Leadership Competencies

The CAO's offered a wide array of competencies that were essential for effective leadership including a broad institutional perspective, interpersonal skills, and resolve to make decisions. Along with these most frequently mentioned competencies, innovation, management skills, drive, and agility were seen as distinctive qualities needed to be an effective leader. Also, another key quality was the ability to navigate through and respond to the current challenges of higher education. Though not necessarily a

competency, the desire to foster opportunities for minority populations and underrepresented groups was frequently mentioned.

Many thought that institutions should seek to determine the skills and leadership profiles that currently exist in their talent pool. One useful aid in this process could be the Leadership Competencies Scorecard Inventory, which is a tool developed by Brent Ruben to assess the skill sets of developing leaders. This tool was created through a cross section review of leadership books and articles. (Ruben, 2006, p.11). Ruben identified 400 “critical facets” of leadership as synthesized from his metanalysis of the literature. Rubens new facets were used to create and develop five (5) competency areas with thirty-five (35) themes. This is the LCSI. The competencies listed include analytic, personal, communication, organizational, and positional competencies (p. 12). This tool could be utilized to assess competencies of faculty members or department chairs to assess their preparedness to move into a more administrative role.

#### Appointing and Identifying Candidates

The information presented regarding these processes was framed within the context of Christian Higher Education and liberal arts institutions. With regards to appointing and identifying candidates for academic leadership, it was seen that no formal plans exists, processes are position specific, and that self-identification occurs but can be problematic. If candidates self-identify for a position then hopefully they are good, because hiring well at this level is vital to effective functioning. The CAO’s talked about looking out for potentials by watching their faculty, informally meeting external people, and looking for ways to enhance already established competencies by giving them opportunities.

### External and Internal Candidates

The CAO's mentioned many tensions associated with both external and internal candidates. There were both positives and negatives for each. The main findings included: external candidates bring a fresh perspective and internal candidates mind the mission. One finding of the study seemed unusual and almost could be labeled as remarkable. Many CAO's supported promising future leaders leaving their own institution to assume leadership positions at other CCC or CCCU institutions. They realized that though not optimal, they wanted what was best for their employees.

### Development Opportunities

Both formal and informal development opportunities were deemed necessary to achieve the outcomes desired for upcoming leaders at faith based institutions. Networking is really important to the majority of CAO's. As briefly mentioned in the literature review, there are multiple opportunities for the Christian higher education community at large to convene often at conferences, informal gatherings and specific leadership institutes. Many of the leaders have risen up in the field together and have strong ties to other institutions specifically through the CCCU.

### Recommendations and opportunities for succession planning

Below is a summary of the main findings and recommendations based on the premise that there must be an increased commitment of governing boards, presidents, and chief academic officers at faith-based institutions to the following efforts for the future development of academic leadership. Also see figures 1 and 2 for further specified recommendations

1. Institutions should be proactive about creating a formal plan for managing talent

and succession of their academic leaders

2. Institutions should assess fiscal resources for succession planning initiatives in conjunction with faculty development (including a position to facilitate the initiatives)
3. Institutions should create a running list of hybrid opportunities and administrative projects where potential leaders can test their abilities
4. Development opportunities must cultivate an increasingly broad institutional perspective for faculty members who are viable leadership candidates for the department chair, dean or vice president or provost level
5. Institutions must be committed to developing internal candidates to their fullest potential, and strategic about looking outside the institution for a diverse population
6. In the succession planning process, include a specific review of high potential minorities and women
7. Establish new creative partnerships among faith- based institutions that include and extend beyond Council for Christian Colleges and Universities Leadership Development Institute and Womens Leadership Development Institute.

### Implications of this Study for Christian Higher Education

Based upon the review of the literature and the findings of this study, there were a number of implications. Now is the time to begin the conversation regarding succession planning at all faith-based institutions. In order to be deemed successful at succession

planning, institutions would make a strong, formal commitment to succession planning. Institutions would be wise to begin assessing their current strengths and weaknesses, and provide a course of action for moving forwards towards better succession planning. Capelli (2008) emphasizes the need for new models of talent management as most plans were developed more than fifty years ago (p. 1). This study of CAO's begins a process that will allow small, faith based liberal arts schools among others to see what are the viable needs associated with strategically planning for the next generation of academic leadership.

One significant finding from this study is that succession planning does not appear to be a formal task included in a job description. Perhaps before developing an intricate succession plan, institutions must first develop a plan outlining their commitment to succession planning and assign the responsibility to a specific individual. Who will take on this role? What are the foreseeable 1, 5, 10, and 20 year institutional needs to be met in academic leadership? In his book, *Effective succession planning: Ensuring leadership continuity and building talent from within*, Rothwell (2005) discusses the future of succession planning with a focus on practical ways of application. This resource could be valuable to administrators as they commit to developing leaders across the institution. It provides specific ways of creating personal development plans and assessing an organization's gaps in talent. It offers a chronology of acceptance of this as an issue in organizations, and then predicts the future of succession planning processes in both for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. He offers the following predictions:

“In the future, succession planning and management will:

1. Prompt efforts by decision makers to address future organizational talent needs
2. Lead to integrated retention policies that identify potential talent earlier, retain that talent, and preserve older high-potential workers.
3. Have a global impact
4. Be influenced increasingly by technological innovations
5. Become an unprecedented issue in government agencies, academic institutions, and non-profit enterprises
6. Increasingly be integrated with career development issues
7. Be increasingly influenced by work/family balance and spirituality
8. Focus increasingly on real-time talent development efforts as well as strategic efforts which center around the role of managers in daily work with their reports
9. Center as much around ethical and value-oriented issues as around competency-based issues
10. Become more fully integrated with selection decisions
11. Focus on leveraging talent as well as developing it
12. Include alternatives to one-hire-at-a-time approaches for the purposes of rapid and broad-based talent acquisition
13. Become closely linked with risk management and concerns about security
14. Become associated with more than management succession.”

CCC institutions must commit themselves to understanding more fully what is necessary for the future, assessing their current talent pools, and creating a viable

strategic plan of action for preparing future leaders if they are serious about sustaining their colleges and universities. While sustainable effectiveness is implemented by the people of an institution, the processes must be in place to ensure the sustenance of those individuals. The most formidable challenge to succession planning moving forward is to balance institutional loyalty with the desire to promote the best interests of both current personnel as well as the goal of Christian higher education.

#### Implications for further research

Future continued studies on succession planning should include and involve specific plans that are institutionally specific, as well as those that are specific for Christian higher education. Any other research that would inform the development procedures for each individual position of academic deans, department chairs, and chief academic officers would enhance the initiatives. Now that this investigation shows the status of succession planning at CCC institutions, the next step following this research would be to develop an actual model of succession planning in academic leadership. Working models have been developed from this study (See Figures 1 and 2).

#### *Diversity in succession planning*

Three participants valued the importance of and the need for preparing future leaders from diverse and underrepresented populations in order to make their institutions more reflective of the greater society. Davies (2007) identifies opportunities related to this institutional commitment to the next generation. Specifically there is an opportunity to prepare a new generation of leaders that would include women and minorities (p. 183). Better recruitment and retention of diversity could improve employee and student satisfaction and thus improve overall institutional effectiveness. This study will also

benefit those who are interested in the future implications for research: Since the inclusion of minorities and women in administrative positions is currently considered of the essence in Christian schools, this is an integral component of the study to assess the current status of this process, and to make recommendations for the future advancement of women and minorities. “The ‘no change’ option is actually not an option. With increased competitiveness combined with greater capabilities in strategic planning more senior staff are engaging with the thorny issue of how best to bring about transformational, embedded and lasting change that will ensure their organization not only survives, but thrives” (Marshall, 2007, p. 2).

*Measure of specific institutions against their own benchmarks*

Awareness and commitment to succession planning, talent management, and overall leadership development should be considered a distinctive characteristic of a high performing institution. Based on the literature and current environment in higher education, it seems that not taking this seriously is detrimental to organizational vitality and future functioning. Further research must promote awareness of succession planning as a critical need in the broad context and also promote the assessment of individual institutional commitment. One idea for further research would be to develop a quantitative measure of this commitment found at specific faith based institutions. Perhaps a simple survey that evaluates CAO understanding of their current potentials would be effective. In some sense evaluating quantitatively how big of a problem it is must precede any sort of solution to the problem. Seeing as how many of the participants talked about how this must be a top-down effort starting at the board level, it is important

to put this initiative into their hands. In some capacity it would be important to assess a board-level commitment.

### *Different populations*

Because the study was conducted with such a small population it was difficult to assess the differences between institutions. Though CCC institutions maintain a similar heritage, they experience a variety of issues related to development of personnel. For example, those schools with denominational affiliation must be strategic in different ways with regards to this commitment. A study could be done within the CCCU of denominationally affiliated institutions and compare this to independent institutions. As mentioned in the literature review much research has occurred to develop profiles of the current leadership within the CCCU, but perhaps more specific quantitative research could occur to look at profiles of these specific segments Christian higher education.

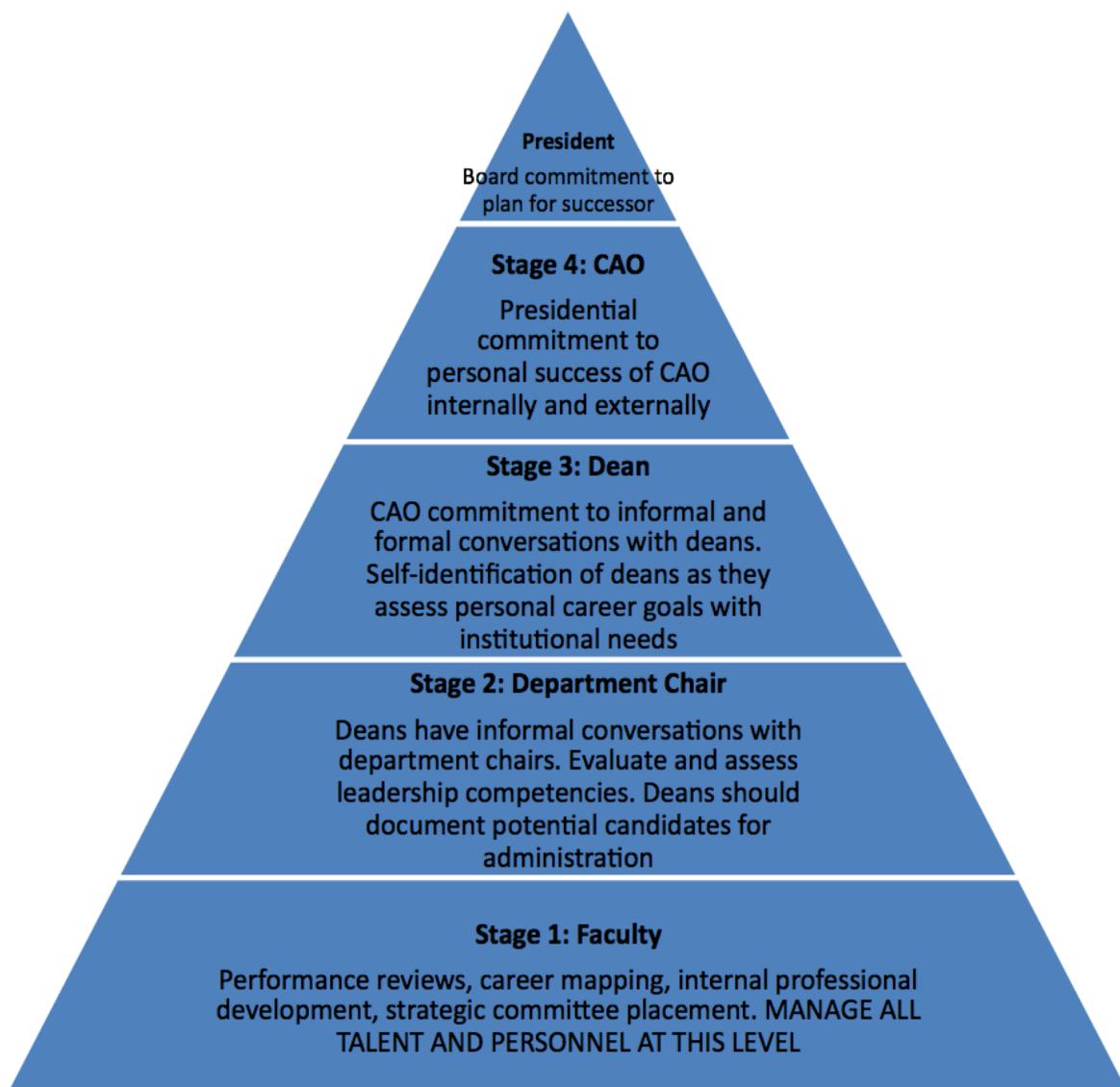
### Limitations

If this same research process were to be repeated there are certain changes that could be made to improving the study. It would be important to revise the interview protocol in order to narrow the focus of the study, and improve the interview process to facilitate more efficient conversation with the participants. Omitting the question in the interview regarding leadership competencies would be helpful as it proved mostly irrelevant to the main portion of the data collection. It would be helpful also to have a longer interview or to be more methodical in the process. Sometimes the participants would get stuck on one question and no response was provided for a more important and relevant question. Limiting the interview to possibly 3 or 4 precise questions with a few follow up questions if necessary would be important. Much of this study involved various

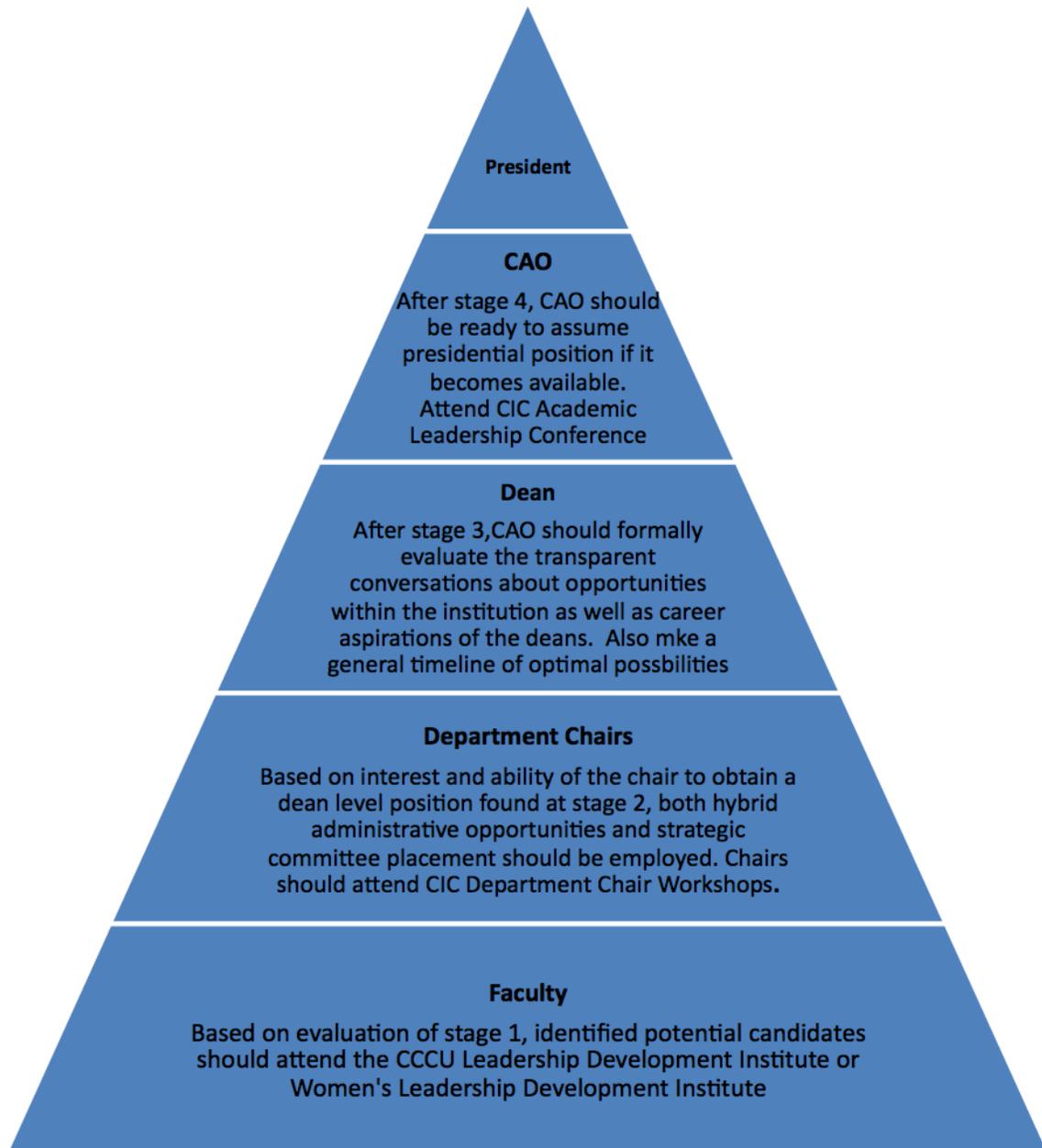
definitions of the term succession planning. Narrowing the scope of the study by precisely defining the terms as opposed to allowing them to be openly interpreted would be another way of making the process more effective.

## Two Step Leadership Succession Model

Figure 1. *Institutional Planning Strategies*



**Step 1**

Figure 2. *Development Opportunities*

## Step 2

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## APPENDIX A: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

Provost,

You are invited to participate in a qualitative study of CCC institutions regarding talent management and succession planning for administrators. This master's level thesis will assess the status of administrative succession planning in the CCC.

A brief 20-30 minute interview over the course of the next month will be necessary to gain the information regarding your institution. Please look for an email from the graduate assistant to the Provost, Emily Hunt, within the next week. Emily is in her second year in the Taylor University M.A in Higher Education and Student Development program. Thank you for your involvement in this study.

Benefits of the study will be far reaching within our own consortium in establishing institutionally consistent methods of leadership development, namely succession planning and talent management. The evidence of best practices shows this is a necessary component of purposeful effectiveness for any organization. There will be major implications for further research, as this is merely a scratch on the surface of what we all know to be a vital component of strategically maintaining our current vision and goals. Thank you,

## APPENDIX B: PILOT TEST INTERVIEW

- What are the executive institutional initiatives regarding succession planning at an administrative level?
  - Describe specific processes for identifying those next in line? What are the steps taken to fill critical leadership positions (department chair's, deans, etc)
  - To what extent does top executive involvement and commitment to developing the next generation of institutional leadership exist on your campus?
- What are the relevant competencies and characteristics you are currently looking for to fill administrative positions?
- To what extent is the institution benefited if a new hire is an internal candidate versus an external candidate?
- How do you determine:
  - Which current employees have the skills necessary to move to higher-level positions?
  - When to train employees for leadership positions and when it is best to hire externally
- Does your school have organizational policies, processes, and systems to maintain sustainable vision and mission amidst transitions and replacements?

## APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

*Introduction:* What is the Status of Succession Planning at CCC institutions?

What are the processes and best practices currently being utilized to sustain mission?

- Succession Planning (also called Talent Management) can be defined for this study as the process of identifying and developing talented individuals for the purposes of appointing or promoting them to critical leadership positions within the institution. This is a, “comprehensive leadership and management plan focused on the development of “potentials” through the coordination of strategically orchestrated opportunities” (Burkgren and Halladay, 2007)
- Focus. Academic Leadership: Department Chairs, Associate Deans, Directors, Deans, Executive leaders. This interview will attempt to gain an understanding of the processes related to talent management at CCC schools.

*Appoint:* What are the current practices of your institution in regards to appointing key leaders?

- Do you appoint internal candidates or conduct national searches of external candidates for these critical positions?
- How can an institution keep a sustainable vision and mission amidst personnel transition?

*Identify:* What steps are being taken to identify potential candidates for these positions at your institution?

- Are the institutional systems, processes, or initiatives for identifying those who are next in line?
- What are the relevant characteristics or competencies that leaders should possess?

*Develop:* How do you go about formally and informally developing candidates for a position?

- Who should be involved in developing future leaders for your institution? Is collaboration necessary?

- What specific roles can executive leaders play in the process?

*Challenges:* What are the impediments to succession planning?

- What opportunities do you see for succession planning at your institution?
- Are there institutional roadblocks that keep this talent management from occurring?

## APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT

Your participation is requested in a qualitative study of CCC institutions regarding talent management and succession planning for administrators. This research will assess the status of administrative succession planning in the CCC and will require a brief 30 minute interview to gain the necessary information regarding your institution. Your participation will include the interview process and a final review of the interview material after the coding and analysis has taken place by the principle researcher.

**Procedures:** You will receive the interview questions electronically prior to the scheduled interview. The interview will last for thirty minutes and will be based on the list of questions you have. Your responses will be recorded on tape and notes will be taken as well. At the end of the interview there will be a review of the information shared. The inherent risks in this study include p minimal frustration or discomfort as there are answers that may reveal a lack of understanding or participation in the process described in the study.

**Benefits** of the study will be far reaching within our own consortium in establishing institutionally consistent methods of leadership development, namely succession planning and talent management. The evidence of best practices shows this is a necessary component of purposeful effectiveness for any organization. There will be major implications for further research, as this is merely an initial step in the process.

**Confidentiality** will be maintained by the researcher in that no specific information will be attributed to either an institution or a person during the interview process and in the thesis documentation. The institution's which participate in the study will be listed in the introduction as members of the CCC. The participation in this study is completely voluntary and a refusal to participate will be of no penalty to the school or loss of any benefit.

If you have questions regarding this research please contact Emily A. Hunt, Graduate Assistant and principal researcher, Dr. Steve Bedi, Provost, Taylor University or Dr. Scott Moeschberger, M.A.H.E program methodologist, Taylor University.

X \_\_\_\_\_ Participant Signature  
\_\_\_\_\_ date

X \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Principle  
Researcher  
\_\_\_\_\_ date

## APPENDIX E: LIST OF CCC INSTITUTIONS

Asbury College

Bethel University

George Fox University

Gordon College

Greenville College

Houghton College

Malone University

Messiah College

Seattle Pacific University

Taylor University

Trinity International University

Westmont College

Wheaton College

