DEALING WITH DEANS

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COMPLICATED RELATIONSHIP

- Chairs serve at the pleasure of the dean
- Deans control chairs’ evaluation, salary, etc.
- Deans control resources to departments

Bottom line: You can’t afford to have a bad relationship with your dean
Deans need to impress their “bosses”
serve at the pleasure of the provost/president
judged by effectiveness in meeting goals
most importantly – a flourishing, successful college

Success of a college depends on the success of its departments
Effective chairs are critical for successful departments
TIPS FOR BUILDING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH DEANS

1. Don’t let the budget go in the “red”
   - if you’re headed for a budget shortfall alert your dean ASAP
   - provide a detailed explanation
   - have a plan for getting back in the black
2. Keep your dean informed (Goldilocks dilemma)

Good News? Send “good news” items periodically, but for major successes make sure the dean is the first to know.

Bad News? Balancing act between not “airing dirty laundry” and allowing your dean to be blindsided.
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3. Use the dean’s time wisely
   • Provide an advanced agenda for a meeting
   • Come prepared (data, handouts, etc.)
   • Be clear about the desired outcome
TIPS FOR BUILDING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH DEANS

4. Present your dean in a positive way to your department (but if you are going to use dean as the “fall guy” give him/her a heads-up)

5. When requesting resources, put “skin in the game”
TIPS FOR BUILDING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH DEANS

6. Know how your dean prefers to be kept informed—preferred mode of communication? how frequently dean wants you to “check in”?

7. Keep the dean’s confidences