

# Department Chairs: Managing Up and Down

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Educational Philosophy/Vision

Management Philosophy

Commitment to Shared Governance

Transparent Decision Making

Remember: There will be no secrets

You're not alone – policies, precedents

What Will Be Your Legacy

(for your department and successor)?



To whom you report  
UP

Colleagues ← YOU → admin  
other chairs as chair peers

DOWN

Department  
staff members

Faculty  
colleagues 

## Who's above?

(Provost, Dean, Divisional Head)

And for what purposes?

Staff Personnel Matters

Faculty Personnel Matters

Budgets

Policies



**Advocate effectively**

**Make your case in a timely way**

**Address the Dean's Concerns**

**Meet the Dean's needs**

**Be prompt and responsive in  
work with the Dean's assistants**



# Administrative Peers

Human Resources

Finance/Budget officials

Registrar

Institutional Research

Student Services



# Academic Peers

Other Department Chairs  
Faculty Committees



## Whom do you serve/manage?

Department Staff members

Faculty Members (senior/junior)

Previous department chairs

Graduate teaching assistants

Students





**Whom do you manage?**  
**Managers & Dept. Staff Members**  
**(to whom things are delegated**  
**– or should be)**

Budget

Curriculum

Personnel Matters

Searches

Student Advising

Complaints



**Be responsive to requests**

**Follow procedures**

**Share messages from above – let  
the dean speak without a filter**

**Show how you advocate for the  
department**



**Lead through Affirmation of the  
ideas of others**

**(better to endorse than propose)**

**Delegate - respect the answers**

**Be Accessible**

**Make Personal Visits**



**Build team approaches with  
support staff members**

**Empower each staff member**

**Provide clear expectations and  
regular feedback**



# **Just Managing**

**Advocate for needed change  
(diversity, mentoring, pedagogical  
reform, procedures)**

**Focus on what matters  
Keep a checklist as a reminder**



# **Just Managing**

**Choose communication mode for  
its impact, not just convenience**

**Email, Memo, or in Person?**



# **Just Managing**

**Maintain your identity as a  
teacher/scholar**

**Manage your time**

**Get distance and perspective**

**Find a safe mentor**

