

Position for Strength: Staying Relevant and Competitive in Higher Education

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For years we have shared experiential insight with college and university presidents on a wide variety of operational and philosophical issues. A common theme that has surfaced in these articles is the competitive nature of higher education, and the challenges confronting its leaders for enhanced revenue and relevance. In this issue, we make recommendations for winning in the tough arena of colleges and universities.

We especially thank our colleague John Dysart of The Dysart Group for his cutting-edge analysis and implementation of traditional and non-traditional enrollment models at our partner institutions. Over the past 30 years, we have found his market analytics abilities to be spot on.

The landscape of higher education is changing, and the bottom line is that if institutions do not adapt to it, their future viability will be doubtful. This is a time for bold action and strong leadership. Presidents and stewards of institutions need to step up and make the hard, yet necessary, decisions to not only meet the needs of their students and constituencies, but to exceed them.

Simply put, remaining stagnant will result in failure. What was once considered cutting-edge or innovative may no longer suffice. Complacency is dangerous. Day-to-day activity without a view to the big picture can prove to be expensive. This is why institutions need administrators who are forward-thinking and are determined to stay ahead of the curve. While it may seem daunting, it is possible for those who are willing to learn from others, take advice, do their research, and stay driven by their passion to effect real change.

Scott came to Virginia Wesleyan at a time of opportunity. The institution was at a crossroads, in need of revised business, enrollment, and advancement models, and Scott led VWU toward the path of transformation. Virginia Wesleyan continues to be profiled in national publications for its success story.

Recently, Scott was invited to submit a narrative describing the institutional transformation, as well as key "takeaway" points designed to inspire other institutions meeting the challenges confronting small and mid-sized colleges and universities today. The principals discussed can be explored in *Business Officer* magazine, the official publication of the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO). Read "Position for Strength" at: <https://www.businessofficermagazine.org/features/position-for-strength/>.

About the Authors

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