

My opportunity to shadow Dr. Howard was originally scheduled to begin at 8am on Wednesday, April 24, 2019. The first teachable moment, many followed, occurred at 8:33am upon Dr. Howard's arrival. In a senior administrative role, it is important to check your email before bed and first thing in the morning. Why you ask? It's one of the main sources of communication to determine if any changes/updates have occurred during time away. Had I checked my email that morning; I would've seen the email referring to the time change to begin at 8:30am instead of 8am. Teachable moments were expressed throughout the day. Moments such as: always carry your business cards, building and maintaining relationships are essential, the president's role requires a great deal of reading and writing; tough decisions have to be made, and when answering a question say the answer first followed by an explanation; if needed.

It was explained when I received a copy of Dr. Howard's schedule that I would be included in every step of the day; minus a system board conference call. The day before, Dr. Howard asked if I could sit in on the call. However, due to the nature of the call it was recommended I didn't. The decision was understandable being how prominent the president's position is. None the less, he took the time waiting for the call to explain about Board of Regents meetings. Meetings occur every quarter and prior to the meeting, a conference call amongst the systems presidents, chancellor, and vice chancellor occurs to discuss the upcoming agenda. This call was about rule and regulation updates. I had an opportunity to glance through the LIT version of May's TSUS Board Book, which consisted of 29 pages (which Dr. Howard had to read). This shined light on demanding reading requirements for the role as President. Oh how one must stay cognizant of updates consistently happening in higher education.

During the day, I had an opportunity to witness Dr. Howard's interaction with external stakeholders. We attended two events: Notary luncheon (delicious food) and Chamber Board Meeting. He mentioned the importance of maintaining community relationships. He serves on several advisory boards, non-profit organizations, chambers and other community organization boards; which in return supports LIT. He speaks how external stakeholders are part of the puzzle for LIT's success. Sometimes we may question his whereabouts when we do not see him on campus; well, I know I have a time or two. However, he explained more than likely he is attending events/meetings as these. He was **patient** and **attentive** to each individual who wanted to speak with him. It didn't matter if they were speaking about how proud they were of him, another option to promote LIT, telling jokes, sharing family history, or military stories, he listened. In respect, each individual I was introduced to spoke very highly of Dr. Howard and supported LIT fully. I stood and listened eagerly as I was delighted to know him and to be a part of the LIT family.

I had a chance to observe the president in a mentoring role. His mentee (Dr. Mary Sizemore from LSCO) stopped by to visit with him and he took the opportunity to share key information with the both of us. He spoke about the importance of networking. He encouraged both of us to strengthen our network outside our scope of work and beyond our personal city limits. He expressed how he utilizes his network for different scenarios he faces in his role, their expertise in subject matters, mentorship, calls for

encouragement, and so. In the same respect, he also received calls as well. I also had a chance to ask questions. Questions such as the campus 10 in 10 vision, the low-enrollment faculty verses low enrollment programs, as the president what does he focus on daily, keeping his emotions at bay and so on. We spent a lengthy time discussing these questions and different factors that influence each.

Dr. Howard reached out to a colleague for his expertise in post 10-year program review process. When his colleague began speaking of assessment, three-year systematic program review, three-year sub-program review cycle and student affair review, it lit a fire in me. I saw first-hand how essential strengthen ones network is. Using his network helped him find a solution to a problem. It goes back to the saying “why reinvent the wheel”. He will continue to focus on enrollment. Enrollment pays the bills.

Overall, Dr. Howard was open and answered each question asked, encouraged growth, shared his own personal experiences, expressed true care for LIT family, leads fearlessly not recklessly, leads by separating fact from fiction, prays for leadership wisdom, and he doesn't claim to know it all. He chooses to lead by example. I'm grateful and appreciative for the opportunity to ***job shadow the president for a day***.

Submitted by:

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