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**Decisions Making?:  
A Rapid Response in  
Crisis Management**

# Objectives of DMF

- ◆ Intuitively identify the core problem
- ◆ Be knowledgeable of any/all options.
- ◆ Effectively provide and solutions
- ◆ Properly assess your own process and outcomes of your strategy

**\*No absolute single or correct way to respond to contemporary student affairs problems!!!\***

# Ground Information

- ◆ Utilization is not congruent across all professional fields
- ◆ Do not underestimate the potential of technology
- ◆ Effective GUIDE for new and seasoned professionals
- ◆ Zeleny Approach
  - Outcomes-oriented approach vs. Process-oriented approach

# Structure

- ◆ **Phase 1** – Identification of the Problem
- ◆ **Phase 2** – Comprehensive Scan of the Options
- ◆ **Phase 3** – Implementation
- ◆ **Phase 4** – Assessment

# Decision-Making Framework

## 3 Components

- 1) Decision-Making Phases
- 2) Tasks
- 3) Key Questions & Considerations

# Identification of the Problem

## Initial Appraisal

- ◆ Urgency? Threat Assessment?
- ◆ Victim Vulnerability?
- ◆ Who should be informed?
- ◆ Buy yourself some time

**\*STUDENT AFFAIRS PROBLEMS ARE  
NEVER TO BE SOLVED ALONE!!\***

# Identification of the Problem

## Define the Problem

- ◆ Gain a better understanding of the problem
- ◆ Collect facts
- ◆ What is your role?
- ◆ What is your authority/responsibility?
- ◆ Better understanding? Did it change?
- ◆ Are there any other issues associated with the main problem?

# Identification of the Problem

## Desired Outcomes or Results

- ◆ What do you hope will happen to alleviate immediate stress?
- ◆ Long term goal?
- ◆ Impact your decisions will have on campus community?
- Must know what ideal results look like
- May have to engage in immediate and subsequent problem solving

# Comprehensive Scan of Options

## Pre Existing or Design New Solutions

- ◆ How have previous problems been addressed?
- ◆ Protocols and resources available to handle this situation?
- ◆ What are options available to you?
- ◆ Ideas from colleagues and professional staff?

# Comprehensive Scan of Options

## Determine Option that Best Match Desired Outcome

- ◆ What are your barriers and obstacles? How will you circumvent?
- ◆ Any constituents negatively affected by a particular option?
- ◆ What resources do you need?
- ◆ Weigh pros and cons of each option

# Implementation

## Move Forward with your Solution

- ◆ What is the specific plan of action?
- ◆ Who needs to do what?
- ◆ Time frame for each task delegated?
- ◆ Involve others
- ◆ Communication, Communication, Communication!

**LACK OF COMMUNICATION = FAILURE**

# Implementation

## Possible Reappraisal of Plan

**UNINTENDED DILEMMAS OCCUR AT ANY GIVEN TIME!**

- ◆ How will you deal with unforeseen issues?
- ◆ Is your initial analysis on target?
- ◆ Do you need to re-evaluate?
- ◆ Any changes in your current strategy?

# Assessment

## Reflect on Impact and Success of Solution

- ◆ Were your outcomes achieved?
- ◆ Any/All unanticipated events addressed?
- ◆ Who did you consult to determine the impact?

# Assessment

## Reflection of Process and New Learning

- ◆ What have you learned from your mistakes, if any?
- ◆ What would you do differently in the future?
- ◆ What alterations need to be added to the current policies and procedures?

# Conceptual Contexts

- ◆ Professional
- ◆ Campus
- ◆ External

# Professional Context

- ◆ Historical Documents
- ◆ Ethical Standards
- ◆ Theories
- ◆ Contemporary Research

# Campus Context

- ◆ Institution type, size, climate, etc.
- ◆ Culture values, ideologies, and norms
- ◆ School classification
  - Degrees, funding, population, etc.

# External Context

- ◆ Community Involvement
- ◆ Political Affiliations
- ◆ National and Global Context

# Scenario

- ◆ JCU is a research university with a 20,000 student population (4000 students live on campus). As Director for Student Involvement & Leadership, you led the Division of Student Affairs in creating a vibrant campus life program. One Friday morning while arriving to campus, you see a group of 25 students gathered at the entrance of the Student Union. Upon further inquiry you learn that the students are protesting recent efforts by the administration to create an environment of civility and respect. The students view this as a violation of their first amendment rights. “They just want to quiet us!” You notice three police cars have arrived at the student union and you have been told by a student that the local media was contacted about this protest. As the Student Union Director walks up, the students chant out “lets head to the administration building!”
- ◆ JCU was recently in the media for protest regarding the university’s lack of response to inquiry regarding potential donors who are tied to “sweatshops”. It is also Parent/Family Weekend.

# Conclusion

- ◆ NO MODEL IS PERFECT!
- ◆ Decision making is not a linear process

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SOLVED ALONE!**

# Reference

- ◆ Vaccaro, A., McCoy, B., Champagne, D., & Siegel, M. (2013). *Decisions matter*. (1st ed.). Washington: Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education.