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Executive Leadership Selection:
A Comparison of University President and City Manager Search Processes

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Senior Project
Jepson School of Leadership Studies
University of Richmond
Richmond, Virginia
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In recent months, the President of the University of Richmond and the City Manager for the City of Richmond resigned their positions. The replacement of these executive officers provides a challenge for these two organizations. The right candidate will continue their efforts to improve their organizations. The wrong candidate may cause many problems for several years.

This research will show the connection between the leadership structure of a private liberal arts university and a city with a council-manager government. The focus of this research is to identify key components of the search process in each situation and analyze what each organization is seeking in their search for new leadership. The paper will examine different factors that are important to each organization and how these factors affect their executive search.

This project came about through my close association with both organizations. I decided that a study should be done comparing the leadership structure of both organizations. When Dr. Morrill and Mr. Bobb resigned their positions during the past year, it provided me with an opportunity to examine the selection process the two organizations use in seeking new leadership.

This study will be beneficial in bridging the gap of executive leadership searches between local government and a private university. There is a tremendous amount of
differences that people perceive between these two organizations, and this study will examine that perception in the area of new leadership searches. It is important to see what characteristics each organization will look for in leader and how they will go about finding this leader.

**METHODOLOGY**

This project examined similarities and differences between Richmond City leadership search and the University of Richmond’s leadership search in the form of a case study. Specifically it looked at how leadership selection is affected by organizational goals. It also attempts to observe other factors such as input by followers and supporters and in the case of the University, parents and alumni.

Yin points out five steps of case study research design as being important. The first component is the questions being used for the study. He points out the most important questions for a case study are “how” and “why” (Yin, 29). In this case, the questions would be how do these two organizations make their leadership selection decisions, and why do they make them in this way?

The second and third components are the study’s propositions and the units of analysis. One of the propositions is that the search processes are similar as a result of the similar organizational structures. At the top
of both of these organizations is a council or board; the City Council for the City and the Board of Trustees for the University. Below them are their executive leaders (City Manager/President) and then it branches out to include Deputy City Managers and Vice-presidents respectively. A second proposition would be that the organizations strategic plan and organizational structure have an affect on their new leadership choice. My third proposition is that the organizations objectives impact the characteristics that are being sought in a leader. The units of analysis are the executive leadership function of the two types of organizations being examined. In this case, those are the president of a private university (University of Richmond) and the city manager of a council-manager government (Richmond).

The remaining two components are “the logic linking data to the propositions and the criteria for interpreting the findings” (Yin, 29). For these components I compared the information that I have collected as a result of researching the two organizations and used it to compare and contrast their leadership search.

The following questions are main research questions that are being answered in this project:

• In an executive level search process, how are leadership requirements in a city government organization and a private university different?
• In an executive level search process, how are leadership requirements in a city government organization and a private university similar?

• How do these differences impact the kind of leadership that is most effective for each organization?

I had hypothesized that the process itself will have more similarities than differences. Differences arose in the criteria that each organization used to choose the new leaders and the strategic goals that focus the institutions.

The information for this project came from both traditional research and interviews. Research was done using a variety of literature about search firms, private universities, and city governments. Various individuals and groups who are affected by the leadership change were interviewed including senior executives.

The information obtained through interviews was combined and separated by organization. The answers were then compared to each other. Other information was collected through research regarding the organizations respective leaders and the processes that are being used to find the new ones. The information gathered in the interview process and the research process were compared in the analysis.
Literature Review

UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

A report was prepared by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges on the problems with university leadership. This report found that the structure of a university prevents it from making decisions as fast as they need to make them. “At a time when higher education should be alert and nimble, it is slow and cautious instead, hindered by traditions and mechanisms of governing that don’t allow the responsiveness and decisiveness the times require” (Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges 7). Shared governance is defined in this report as a system in which “presidents, boards, and faculty participate in making decisions about a wide variety of important issues affecting the institution” (Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges 7). The study implies that the shared governance structure of most universities causes schools to be slow in making progress.

The study also states that private boards (of trustees) generally are large and resistant to change. However, they are also usually dedicated to the university. The most significant task for boards is to choose a president. It is believed that boards have difficulty determining what their university needs in a president.

Robert Hahn, who is the president of Johnson State College, wrote an article titled “How Tough Is It To Be a
College President?" that explains how the college president position has become more difficult over the years. Changes through the 1950’s and 1960’s transformed college presidents from a “contemplative, tweedy, pipe-smoking president” or a “dean of deans” to a “business manager, fund raiser, negotiator, and no-nonsense chief executive officer as well as an academic leader” (Hahn 64).

One reason that the role of college president has become more difficult over the years is their constant interaction with various stakeholders who have very different agendas. Each group believes that the president should be able to meet their requests regardless of the demands of others. Presidents must satisfy expectations of students, parents, faculty, administration, alumni as well as other relevant groups. In addition to these groups, college presidents, whether they are president of a private or public institution, are also responsible for being in compliance with the government.

It is believed that the new difficulties of being a college president have led to having the highest turnover rate ever. As of 1990, the average stay for a college president was 6.7 years. A recent study shows an increase in college president’s tenures, placing them at an average of 7.3 years as of 1995 (Wilcox 30). The high turnover is probably a result of the fact that almost half of college presidents are in office for five years or less (Wilcox 30). “William J. Bowen, vice-president of Heidrick
Struggles, Inc., Consultants in Executive Search, reports that forty percent of presidents have a tenure in office of about three years" (McLaughlin 23).

CITY MANAGER GOVERNMENT

According to Harold Stone in City Manager Government in the United States, the first ideas of City Manager government began in 1906. Staunton, Virginia’s city council was trying to decide who should run city affairs when Hugh Braxton (member of the Street Committee of the Common Council) suggested that they hire an engineer to take charge of the streets and to perform “such other duties as may be properly required of him by the Council” (Stone 8). This idea was not acted on and in the following year a committee led by John Crosby (clerk of the Board of Supervisors) suggested that the council hire a general manager (Stone 9). In 1908, Charles E. Ashburner was selected to be the city’s general manager who later became remembered as the first city manager.

The City Manager Plan was a combination of the commission plan and the Staunton plan. Both were attempts to make government more like a corporation. Richard Childs combined the two plans in an effort to accomplish a different goal beyond a new government. However he did feel that the Staunton plan attacked the commission plan’s main deficiency, which was the lack of good administrative
abilities. He is the individual that came up with the title “city manager.”

As the idea of the City Manager plan began to spread, the number of cities with city manager governments grew from one in 1908 to 451 in 1938.

As the number of City Managers increased, the environment changed forcing the position to change. Changes in technology, public demand, and the increased skills of employees have caused the City Manager to change his role. A study was done to determine the necessary skills and practices for a twenty-first century City Manager. They are as follows:

- Effective communication
- Consensus building
- Collaborating with elected officials
- Coaching employees
- Democracy building
- Engaging the public in bold new ways
- Identifying and managing paradox
- Embracing ambiguity and uncertainty
- Becoming a more effective Organizational leader

(Parrish 17).

City Council expectations are another factor that has increased the difficulty of being a city manager. When a council has the opportunity to pick a new manager, they attempt to pick one that will carry out their ideas. They also make several assumptions when they select their new...
manager that can cause conflict if left unsaid. These conflicts can include money issues, hidden agendas, personality conflicts, and evaluations (Mathis 5-10). Other problems can arise from several issues. One of these issues is the inability to choose the manager. Sometimes it is hard for some council members to support a manager that they did not select. Another lofty expectation is for managers to take “maverick” council members “out behind the woodshed” (Mathis 10). They are expected to ease the tension between council members during conflict. All of these factors have contributed to the average tenure of three years for City Managers.

SEARCH PROCESS

The primary purpose for executive search firms is to find candidates for the organization to select from. The firms get information from the organization to find out what they are looking for in a leader. This information is then used to create a list of possible candidates. The firm then narrows down the list and gives what they perceive to be the best possible candidates for the position to the organization to select from.

When organizations look for new leadership, they must first examine themselves. They have to look at their current situation and determine where they want to go from there. They then must determine what type of leader would best fit their organization and take them where they are trying to go. New leaders often fail because organizations
do not know the impact that a certain type of leader will have on their organization (Hahn 64). Eventhough he is specifically talking about the college presidency this can be applied to any organization.

One problem in executive searches is the ability to keep the search confidential. Organizations usually like to keep quiet about their candidates. One reason for this is that the candidates currently hold positions. Courtney Leatherman gives several examples in his article “Troubled Searches” on candidates who dropped out once their name became public. In Leatherman’s article, Charles Reed, chancellor of the State University System of Florida, speaks out for his desire for college president searches to be public. His thoughts are that this leads to better, honest presidents who admit that they are ready to leave their current position.

Some organizations legally do not have a say in the publicity of their search. “Sunshine laws” are laws that relate to the freedom of information acts. Specifically, in regards to this situation, they “require boards of public institutions to conduct presidential searches entirely in public view” (Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 10). In regards to this paper, the University of Richmond is not subject to this law because it is a private institution. However, the City of Richmond is public and would have to uphold this law.
Another issue in executive searches is the selection of internal candidates. In most cases, search firms are going to look outside of the organization for new leadership. One reason is that the firm must justify their “substantial fees by producing a candidate that the board did not know about” (Perry B6). Another problem that internal candidates may face is the desire of their organization for new direction. The organization may believe that they need a person from outside to accomplish this.

City government and colleges are differ from the corporate world in this aspect. In the business world, there is a tendency of “growing you own candidates” (Perry 15). Unless they are facing extreme situations, they usually replace former leaders from within their organization. In the case of government and colleges, they tend to place their own in acting positions but not permanent positions. Many colleges tend to send their best candidates for presidency to other educational institutions.

The ethics of a search firm are often questioned when their candidate is unsuccessful. According to Judith Dobrzynski, executive search firms should feel responsible to carry out their clients wishes as best they can. However, search firms have no legal responsibility once placement has been made. It would be in their best interest to make a successful placement because it could lead to a higher payment and repeat business (Dobrzynski C5).
Dobrzynski feels that executive search firms should not accept jobs that they feel are flawed. It is rare that a firm turns down an opportunity, but they should when they feel that the search will not be successful. For example (from Dobrzynski's article), when recruiters were acquired to find a new executive for AT&T, they knew the search was flawed. They still carried out their business of finding a new executive that turned out to be unsuccessful.

**FINDINGS**

**UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND**

The Baptist General Association of Virginia founded the University of Richmond in 1830. It is a private university with five academic schools consisting of the School of Arts and Sciences, the E. Claiborne Robins School of Business, the Jepson School of Leadership Studies, the T.C. Williams School of Law, and the School of Continuing Studies. The University has 270 full-time faculty which gives it a student-faculty ratio of 11 to 1.

The student body at the University of Richmond consists of 2,856 full-time undergraduate students (fall, 1994) and 3,401 overall. The breakdown between men and women is virtually equal with 51% men and 49% women. The university is divided by gender into two residential colleges. The men belong to Richmond College and the women belong to
Westhampton College. This allows students to have more opportunities for leadership positions at the university.

The University of Richmond has a very hierarchical structure. The executive structure consists of a president and five vice presidents. The current president is Dr. Richard Morrill. The vice-presidents are Dr. Leonard Goldberg, student affairs; Dr. Zeddie Bowen, provost; Dr. John Roush, planning and executive assistant to the president; Chris Withers, development and university Relations; and Herbert Peterson, business and finance. Each vice-president heads a variety of different departments in both Richmond and Westhampton College. The University also has a forty member Board of Trustees that provides policy and direction for the president (see Appendix 4).

Dr. Richard Morrill announced during the spring of 1997 that 1998 would be his last year as president of the University of Richmond. He has held this position since 1988. Prior to being the president of Richmond, Dr. Morrill served as president at Salem College and Centre College.

Dr. Morrill was originally offered the position in 1986 while he was the president of Centre College. He declined the offer. Two years later, Morrill was approached again during another presidential search by Richmond. This time he accepted the offer. After his time expires as Richmond's President, Dr. Morrill will go on sabbatical for a year. He will then return to the University to teach.
Dr. Morrill admits to being asked to stay which is understandable considering the many accomplishments at the University during his tenure. Under Dr. Morrill’s leadership, the University was ranked number one in its category according to a U.S. News survey in 1994. Some other highlights during Dr. Morrill’s time at Richmond include the 1992 presidential debate, increases in undergraduate admission as well as in total assets, and the largest campaign in Richmond’s history raising $164 million.

The University has selected the search firm, Hiedrick and Struggles, and is currently going through the selection process. It began with Dr. Morrill putting together a presidential profile. Dr. Morrill created a list of responsibilities and requirements for the next president. This list was then used along with advisement from the selection committee to produce a list of possible candidates. In addition to this list, possible candidates were allowed to reply to advertisements about the position and some people were added to the list through recommendations. Members of the selection committee met with some possible candidates and decided on the top three candidates. The three candidates were allowed to come to campus and meet with the Board of Trustees. The Search Committee makes recommendations and the Board of Trustees makes the final decision.

The Search Committee consists of eighteen individuals and is chaired by Robert L. Burrus. There are nine present
and past members of the Board of Trustees: Burrus, Lewis T. Booker, Austin Brockenbrough, Otis D. Coston, Jr., Robert S. Jepson, Jr., Ann Carol Marchant, Gilbert Rosenthal, Robert S. Ukrop, and Elaine J. Yeatts. There are four members that are from the University’s faculty and administration; Jane M. Berry, Mary L. Heen, David Leary, and Jon Michael Spencer, and two university staff members, Richard Dunsing and Judy Wilkinson. Two students, Hall McGee, IV and Erica Motley are also on the committee. The final member of the committee is William Bowen who is an employee of the search firm. (see Appendix 1)

THE CITY OF RICHMOND

William Byrd founded Richmond in 1737, and it became a town in 1742 with a population of 250 (1990 census, 203,056). In May of 1782, Richmond became the state capital. Richmond’s first government consisted of twelve council members. One of these members was selected to be mayor.

The city moved towards a council-manager government in 1948. The City Council, which is now nine people (one from each district), selects the city manager, and the city manager appoints directors to various departments throughout the city. The City of Richmond’s web page describes the city manager as the Chief Executive Officer of Richmond. This description is representative of the original goals of
the City Manager plan, an attempt to make government more like industry.

On Tuesday, October 14, 1997, Richmond’s city manager for the past eleven years resigned. Robert Bobb accepted the offer from the City of Oakland to become their new city manager. He left after weeks of speculation that City Council was unhappy with him.

Mr. Bobb came to Richmond as city manager in 1986. His first city manager position was in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He held this position for seven years. Prior to that he was the director of public utilities for the city. In between Kalamazoo and Richmond, Bobb spent two years in Santa Ana, California. Mr. Bobb’s tenure of eleven years is a tremendous accomplishment being that the average stay in office for a city manager is three years.

During his time as Richmond’s city manager, the City had major successes. A few major projects that he is credited with are “guiding the floodwall project that spurred development in Shockoe Bottom and in South Side” and “shepherding the current riverfront development project” (Campbell A5). The former city manager is also credited with leaving the city in a strong financial situation.

Even with all of his success in Richmond, he has often been held accountable for the problems within the city. The major problem has been the City’s crime rate. Richmond’s police chief, Jerry Oliver, believes that the rate would be the same regardless of the city manager. “People will see
that there is no correlation between crime rates and who is manager or police chief" (Campbell A5). Another failure that occurred during Bobb’s term is the reduction in business downtown. Major chains, Thalhimers and Miller & Rhodes, left the city in addition to the quick rise and fall in popularity for the 6th Street Marketplace.

The problems between Mr. Bobb and City Council was reported to be a personnel problem. As city manager, Mr. Bobb had the authority to appoint several executive positions such as deputy city managers and department heads. City Council’s conflict with him was said to be over the production of some of his appointments. Soon after these complaints became public, City Council put them down by setting goals for Bobb to reach over the next year. One month later Mr. Bobb accepted another position.

Around the time of City Manager Bobb’s resignation, several department heads left the city. On February 27, George Musgrove, Deputy City Manager over Human Services joined him to Oakland. Half of the department director positions in the City right now are filled by acting directors. According to the Richmond Free Press (February 5-7, 1998), acting managers fill 11 of the 19 top executive positions. However, the City does not seem to be in a hurry to fill these positions. It is believed that they will wait until the new City Manager is in place to fill the positions. The new City Council will be voted in on July 1, 1998. At this point the new Council will make a decision on
who will be the next City Manager. Bill Hawkins has been
hired to assist Richmond in the search.

A month after Mr. Bobb's resignation, the current
City Council set up a procedure to be used to select the new
City Manager. According to these procedures, the search
firm will be "required to get comment from the community and
the council in developing criteria for the next manager"
(Hickey B3). The issue of waiting for the new council to be
in place occurred during the last City Manager selection in
1986. The selection was made after the new council was
elected. Some of the current list of requirements include:

- "must place a strong emphasis on crime,
- must have strong financial and budgetary skills,
- must keep the administration out of politics,
- must have a thick skin and a short memory" (Hickey
  B3).

**INTERVIEWS**

In order to get an understanding of both organizations,
a list of questions was used for members of both the
University of Richmond and the City of Richmond. The
following is a compilation of interview responses that were
given. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 5.

**UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND**

According to Richard Morrill, there are four main
responsibilities for the University of Richmond's president

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to be able to carry out. First, he must be a strong educational leader. Through this, the university’s president must have a good intellectual and educational background. In addition to being an educational leader he must also be an administrative leader by dealing with finances, laws, and personnel. He must be able to lead the faculty and staff of the university. The third responsibility for a president is that he must be a good representation of the University. He has to represent the university to government, other educational institutions, and various associations that he or the school may be a part of. The final responsibility deals with fund raising and public relations. The president is responsible for generating money for the University. The public relations aspect would tie back in with him representing the University.

University administration named various issues that they felt were the most important to the university. One obvious number one issue facing the University today is the search for a new president. Dr. Morrill felt that the number one issue is a new strategic plan being that the previous one (Engagement in Learning) was done in 1994. Other issues included financial issues. Administration felt that the rising price and the access to financial aid were important issues that must be dealt with. Attracting people with different backgrounds and becoming a more international university are among the top priorities.
One individual felt that the University’s main issue is the opportunity that it has to become a top nationally recognized university. In order to do this, the University must reach its full potential in its academic programs. In addition to improving academic programs, the school must also increase diversity.

Dr. Morrill believes that his strengths lie in his strategic planning abilities, his respect for others, and his ability to listen. Others described him as a terrific mentor, an honest and sincere teacher, and an individual with immense balance. It was believed that he has a tremendous ability to handle detail and stay focused. Another strong trait is Dr. Morrill’s connection with the community. Many students feel that he is a charismatic individual.

The current President has no official “say” in the university’s next president; however, he does have input. Dr. Morrill wrote the position profile (Appendix 6) for the search. In addition to that, he has been asked to give recommendations to the selection committee. He has also been asked to stay.

The selection committee consists of a combination of trustees, faculty members, and students (Appendix 1). Their duty, with the assistance of the search firm, is to make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. Then the actual selection decision is left to the Board.
When looking for a new leader, the students wanted a president that is open with the students. Some said that they want all of the University's resources to be shared with students. A third factor for students was to increase diversity at the University. Dr. Roush simply stated that we need another "Rich Morrill." The new president needs to be a careful thinker and planner, and must have good common sense. Dr. Morrill felt that the new president should be one that can focus on a new strategic plan, the current teaching load issues, and the equality (male/female) of college athletics. The University's new president should also be able to understand the needs of his various stakeholders.

Often when an organization loses its leadership, others from the organization soon follow. With Dr. Roush moving on to be the president of Centre College, it looked as if it were a similar trend. He felt that he was simply ready for a difference and that he would have left regardless of President Morrill's decision. He also felt that he had little chance of becoming Richmond's president because of a lack of tradition for the University to hire their president from within. Even though he did not leave as a result of Dr. Morrill's planned departure, he did mention that he could not imagine working for another president at Richmond.

Generally, people felt that the organization was more important than the leader. A good system should not be dependent on one person. It was also felt that there are
also several leaders at the University that make a difference. Dr. Morrill felt that this was especially true in the event of a crisis. The leader is important, however a successful organization should be able to excel regardless of a single individual. Some students do not feel that a new president will make a difference.

City of Richmond

Employees within City Hall seemed to have a consensus on what the main problems facing the City are. The number one stated problem was crime. The City has a strong desire to reduce the crime because many feel that this problem causes other problems such as population problems. The City is currently at its lowest population ever. Another issue that is closely connected are the economic problems that Richmond is facing.

Some City employees felt that if you attempt to fix one problem you will have a domino effect on the others. He believes that the main problem is the City’s education system. He feels that once the school system is improved, the City’s economic problems will lessen. With improved economic conditions, the crime rate will most likely decrease.

Prior to former City Manager Bobb’s departure from the City, there was speculation about problems between he and the Council. As with most things, the reports may not be necessarily accurate because all had good things to say
about the former manager. Most agreed that he had a
tremendous amount of energy. This energy surely helped with
another trait which was his willingness to try new ideas.
It was felt that City Manager Bobb had tremendous vision and
creativity as well as being open to the ideas of others.
Another strong point for Bobb was his experience level.

The selection decision for the new City Manager belongs
to the City Council. There is a subcommittee that is
helping Council in its efforts. This committee consists of
three council members, John Conrad, Kathy Thompson, and
Anthony Jones. Additional members include Chester Brazzell,
Max Bohnstedt, and John Rupp. They will assist in choosing
the search firm and developing the position profile. Being
that the relationship between Mr. Bobb and the City are
still amicable, he will most likely be asked for some advice
as far as the profile and possible candidates.

For some, looking for a new manager is just like hiring
any other employee. You want to make sure that the
individual can work well with the others in the organization
and that they have the experience for the job. Another
important factor is the individual’s priorities. The City
needs an individual that can provide a strong strategic
focus. This person must create goals for the City in
conjuction with the City Council.

Some City employees believe that the City will remain
focused on the same areas of improvement that it is focused
on now. These areas include the reengineering of procedures
and practices for developing policies. He feels that in addition to these areas, there will be emphasis put on improvements in technology and customer interaction. Although it is possible that the City will remain on the course that Mr. Bobb started, it is also possible that with the change in council members there will be a change in focus. In this case, the makeup of the new Council will determine the focus of the new City Manager.

Many articles, discussing Mr. Bobb's, leave state that after being in one place for eleven years, it is guaranteed that you will make enemies. Very few comment on the number of friends that one can make. Currently at the City there are several people in acting positions as a result of recent departures. Some of these people may have decided that with Mr. Bobb's departure that their jobs would be affected, which resulted in their leave from City employment. Some, including Deputy City Manager George Musgrove, followed Mr. Bobb to California.

City Councilman John Conrad felt that Mr. Bobb's departure had a direct impact on other people leaving the city. When Bobb left it caused an "emotional contagion," which caused others to leave the City (Conrad). People felt that his leave would result in political changes.

When questioned how much of a difference will a new city manager actually make, there were mixed reviews. Being that the Council generally makes policy, the city manager position could almost be seen as a figurehead. Council is
responsible for setting policy, direction, and goals; and the manager is responsible for executing them. However, the right person could make a huge difference because they will help determine whether the City will stagnate or grow.

While there was one issue that the City perceived to be number one, there was a variety of answers for the University. The City’s future candidate will come in knowing the main concern of his constituents while the University’s new president will be facing many. There was no common characteristic mentioned that the two former leaders shared. Obviously they both had the ability to meet the needs of their many constituents over a long period of time. In this situation, it shows that there is no one combination of traits that causes one to be a good leader. The selection decision for both organizations belongs to their respective boards. Both have created selection subcommittees that help the search firm in narrowing candidates. Common characteristics that were generally expected in new leaders reflected the current important issues of the organization.

Employees may or may not have left as a result of their leader leaving. The City’s situation is more apparent as a result of more people leaving, some even leaving to go with Mr. Bobb to California. In both cases, people feel that the organization seems to be more important than the individual leader. City Council and the Board of Trustees set the direction for their respective organization. The City
Manager and President are responsible for carrying them in the appropriate direction.

**CONCLUSION**

As expected, the information collected through the use of interviews was similar to the information acquired through research. The research shows that the University of Richmond and the City of Richmond have a variety of things in common. They are both extremely hierarchical organizations that have similar structures. Their similarities are what probably leads them to having an almost identical executive search process. The criteria for selection is not identical, but they used a similar method to create them. The University’s search is near an end and the City’s has barely started.

Both organizations show their respective boards at the top of their organizational charts. The difference being that the customers have the opportunity to select their governing board at the City. Each of the nine districts in the City of Richmond has the opportunity to select a representative to make decisions on behalf of the respective community. New members of the Board of Trustees are selected by the board. The duties of these boards is to select their executive leaders (City Manager/President). These leaders then appoint individuals for their management teams.
Both organizations carried out their searches in similar ways. The City is farther behind than the University at this point as a result of waiting for the new Council. They are also farther behind because the University knew a year ahead of the departure while the City only knew a month ahead of time. Both organizations put together a subcommittee to assist with the selection of a search firm and candidates. The University’s committee even includes some of its customers (students). Both organizations leave the selection decision to their boards. Richmond’s process gets the edge as far as the participation of the various groups because their board is selected by its citizens.

The criterions for each position are determined by the organization’s governing board and its subcommittee in collaboration with their search firm. In both processes, the organizations want candidates that have previously held similar positions before. Both organizations also requested that their current/former leader write position profiles for their job. Other similarities and differences may arise with the completion of the searches but the design of each search is virtually the same. The University’s process has been going on for almost a year and the City has put a six month dead line on theirs.

As determined in the findings, no one characteristic stood out above others as to one that was needed for a leader. Both organizations seemed to feel as if the
current/former leader’s characteristics were the perfect fit. It was important for the leader of each organization to deal with the many constituents. The University had more groups to be responsible for because it had to deal with parents and alumni. It is possible for the City to have issues with former residents, but it is very unlikely.

Overall, these two examples of leaders seem to be more of a representation of the respective organization than a true leader. The respective boards set the plan for the organization, while the President and City Manager select personnel that must assist in accomplishing the plan. Dr. Roush felt that a single leader felt that one persons affect could be “overrated” being that a good organization should not be dependent on a single leader (Roush). Most agreed that the system should be more important than the person.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The two organizations practically have the same process which makes it hard to recommend changes to be more like the other. The University could follow the City’s lead and get more input from the customers. They could do this by allowing students to have some type of input in the selection of the Board of Trustees. Both organizations should attempt to get more input from their constituents.

This suggestion would also benefit the University’s leadership process in general. Students would feel as if they had a say in their education.
Another suggestion could benefit both organizations at the same time. The City and the University could combine their efforts in an attempt to attack one of the issues from each organization. These two issues are the City’s need to improve the school system and the University’s desire to increase diversity. The school system, which has primarily black students, could team up with the University in a mentoring program. This program would have the potential of improving student’s grades.

As a second part to the program, talented students from the high schools that are involved in the program could be offered scholarships to the University. This would be a start to address both problems. The University’s minority populations would increase while students in Richmond Public Schools would benefit by spending time with a University of Richmond Student.
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Appendix

1) University of Richmond’s Presidential Search Committee

2) Richmond City Council

3) City of Richmond Selection Committee

4) University of Richmond Board of Trustees

5) Questionnaire

6) University of Richmond Presidential Profile
University of Richmond
Presidential Search Committee

Present and Past Trustees

Lewis T. Booker
Hunton & Williams

Austin Brookencnhrough
Lowe, Brookencnhrough & Tattersall, Inc.

Robert L. Burrus, Jr., Chair
McGuire, Woods, Battle, & Booth

Otis D. Coston
Stonemark Corporation

Robert S. Jepson, Jr.
Kuhlman Corporation

Ann Carol Marchant

Gilbert M. Rosenthal
Med Outcomes

Robert S. Ukrop
Ukrop’s Super Markets, Inc.

Elaine J. Yeatts
Department of Health Professions

Faculty/Administration

Jane M. Berry
Associate Professor of Psychology

Mary L. Heen
Associate Professor of Law

David E. Leary
Office of the Dean

Jon Michael Spencer
Professor of Music

Students

Hall T. McGee

Erica Motley

Consultant

Judy M. Wilkinson
Associate Prof., Organizational Development

Richard Dunsing
Heidrick & Struggles
City of Richmond
Selection Committee

L. Chester Brazzell
Director of Human Resources and General Services

John A. Rupp
City Attorney

Max Bohnstedt
Deputy City Manager for Internal Affairs, Acting

John A. Conrad
City Council

Kathy H. Thompson
City Council

Anthony D. Jones
City Council

APPENDIX -3-
University of Richmond
Board of Trustees, Officers

Austin Brockenbrough, III
Rector

Gilbert M. Rosenthal
Vice Rector

Richard M. Morrill
President

John A. Roush
Secretary

Louis Moelchert, Jr.
Assistant Secretary and Treasurer

APPENDIX -4-
Questionaire

1) What are the most important issues facing your organization and how has your search for new leadership been affected by these issues?

2) What were the strengths of your current leader and how have they affected your search?

3) What does the search committee consist of in regards to the members of your organization? (Are followers and customers included in the decision?)

4) Does your current/former leader have any say in the decision?

5) What are the strongest factors for choosing a new leader?

6) Are you expecting the new leader to carry the organization in a totally different direction than the former?

7) Do you feel that the recent departure of top executive(s) has anything to do with the pending change in leadership?

8) In your opinion, how much of a difference will a new leader actually make?
University of Richmond
Presidential Profile

The University's president must be able to define a strategic plan for the institution and to translate this plan into reality. To carry out these responsibilities the person should have:

- a distinguished record of academic and educational achievement and a commitment to excellence in the liberal and professional education.

- appropriate values and complete personal integrity.

- the characteristics of an excellent executive officer.

- experience in and eagerness for all forms of fund raising and a demonstrated ability to relate to large donors, to obtain major gifts, and to lead intensive fund-raising campaigns.

- a demonstrated interest and involvement in all community activities and affairs beyond the campus.

- and an energetic and effective manner of representing the University to all constituencies and at all levels.