

Chapter 3

A University as an employing organization

3.1 Introduction

Universities are not only institutions of higher learning but are places of employment for academic and non academic personnel as well. As a result, this chapter will offer an analysis of universities as places of employment. The organizational characteristics of the University will be emphasized and how a University affects its employees and how the employees affect the institution. The last part of the chapter discusses destructive drinking as a result of the unique nature of the University as an employing organization.

3.2 University as a juristic person

Universities are legal personalities that are established in terms of section 32 of the Higher Education Act. Each University has a statute that provides guidelines on the governance structures such as the University council, senate, institutional forum, student representation and public funding of a specific University (Bunting, 1989: 398 - 400).

3.3 Functions of Universities

Universities are considered to be a valuable asset (Muriuki, 1995: 310). Higher education is of paramount importance in the process of developing a country. High-level manpower must be trained and quality research carried out if development policies are to be correctly formulated, programmes appropriately planned and projects effectively implemented (Compare World Bank, 1988: Muriuki, 1995: 310 and section 4 of the National Policy Act 27 of 1996). Consequently, the contributions or functions of Universities may be considered as threefold:

3.3.1 Development of personnel

Since Universities are people processing institutions, government expects the Universities to prepare the needed personnel to fill high level scientific, technical, professional, and management jobs (Bajah, 1995:23). Described as the indispensable core of national capacity, the products of African Universities are perceived as the leaders in Africa's battle against intellectual colonization.

3.3.2 Development of knowledge

Governments expect the Universities to generate the knowledge and innovations needed for development through indigenous scientific research and technical knowhow as well as to disseminate this information (Bunting, 1989: 404). Universities are expected to collect, organize, preserve, manage and propagate knowledge (Maraca, 1995:310; O'Dowd: 1993: 64).

3.3.3 Public service function

Governments expect Universities to render needed high-skill services to the community by the involvement of University staff in local activities. As such the Universities constitute reservoirs of expertise which can be tapped the government and the private sector (Compare Carpenter, 1997: 8).

3.4 The University as an organization

Colleges and Universities are becoming increasingly stressful work environments (Hosokawa, 1990: 125). Unmet expectations constitute an important source of stress for academics. Career prestige and professional recognition, institutional monies for travel or conferences, opportunities to develop new course offerings or skills, salaries with stable purchasing power, and institutional job mobility are all important elements that support the successful negotiation of typical academic career transitions.

Unfortunately, these resources, which facilitate smooth passage through the developmental stages of a single career cycle, are becoming increasingly limited in academe, accentuating for many faculty members feelings of boredom, anger, frustration, depression, and a sense of being trapped or stuck (Baldwin and Blackburn, 1981:598-614).

Furthermore a University is a client-serving and people-processing organization whose fundamental technology is one of changing human beings (Baldrige 1984:53). A factory, a thing-processing organization, gets the job done on the assembly line by using a fundamental logic that involves separating pieces and putting them back again while a people-processing organization uses the reverse logic in trying to approach the individual holistically, a process that can be extremely demanding and stressful.

Management in “people- processing” organizations has in the past tended to be in the hands of the professionals, at least in theory. In spite of their professional status in the scholarly community , the participants in the decision- making process are amateurs. In order to get something done on campus, a committee must be appointed which usually consists of academic personnel from various departments whose expertise does not necessarily lie in the area of management.

"People processing" organizations tend to be goal diffused because they are dominated by professional groups who have an unclear technology (Baldrige 1984:55) especially in the area of decision making.

3.4.1 Decision-making processes in universities

Baldrige (1984: 54- 57) identifies the following characteristics of decision making processes in the universities general:

- Universities are highly professionalised , client serving systems;
- “people-processing” organizations have extremely ambiguous goals, and a list of legitimate activities for a University, a public school, or a social work agency would be too long since they are themselves often not exactly clear about their functions, and are racked with conflict over what they should do or not do;

- if an organization does not know its specific objectives, then an individual with new ideas and the energy can often bend the organization in his direction; and
- finally, Universities are extremely vulnerable to outside pressures. Outside bodies demand the right to influence internal decisions. Sociologist James March referred to this situation as "organized anarchy".

The decision-making process in an "organized anarchy" has some of the following characteristics:

3.4.2 Decision is taken by a committee

Since expertise, not hierarchical office is the organizing principle, committees of experts decide many of the critical issues.

3.4.3 Participation is fluid

Many of the decision-makers are amateurs, engaged in pursuing their professions, not in making decisions. Consequently, they wander in and out of the decision-making process while power belongs to those who stay long enough to exercise it.

3.4.4 There is an issue carousel

Issues have a way of always coming around again. Decisions are not made forever, because pressure from outside groups, from clients, and from professionals pushes the same issues full circle as a result decisions are not made as much as they temporarily are pinned down.

3.4.5 There is a "garbage can" process

The longer it takes to make a decision, the more issues get piled into the original subject. People, hoping to accomplish several things at one time compound simple decisions by adding countless subsidiary issues.

3.4.6 Conflict is common

Professional groups, clients, and outsiders support divergent interests in setting the ambiguous goals of professional organizations. As a consequence, conflict over goals is common as decision-makers have to cope with the pressures from diverse interest groups.

3.5 Rules and tactics for the campus innovation

Bringing about change and innovation in a University can be a tall order. Baldrige (1984:58 - 59) spells out the following rules for bringing about institutional change:

3.5.1 Concentrate your efforts

If you want to change the system, do not chase many rainbows but narrow your focus. The frustration caused by the resistance offered by an immovable system is usually the result of scattered and dispersed efforts.

3.5.2 Know when to fight

Most of the time it makes sense to support issues when you know you can win. If it is obvious that you will lose, wait. With the "issue carousel" the situation will probably return, allowing some time to muster resources for the next battle.

3.5.3 Learn the history

As every issue has roots deep in the past, the wise tactician searches for the historical bases of an issue. Under most circumstances. The person who is historically naive about the issue is usually the loser.

3.5.4 Build a coalition

Never go it alone. This means that a dedicated cadre of change agents must be formed, a committed group that exchanges ideas and reinforces each other's efforts. In addition, a strong change group needs equally strong links to those in viable political coalitions.

3.5.5 Join External Constituencies

Universities usually have strong external constituents who apply pressure to the decision making process. The wise strategist uses support from these external constituencies to influence the internal process (Thoreson, 1984:126). In building coalitions it is important to associate with outside groups as well as inside groups, particularly since major decision makers themselves are often tied to outside groups. Insiders, with their limited view of the outsiders role, naively overlook the political strategy of cultivating external allies.

3.5.6 Use committees effectively

Most major decisions in Universities are made by committees of experts who combine their specialized knowledge to solve organizational problems. Therefore, organizational politics often center around committee politics. Having influence on a committee is frequently equal to having influence over the decision.

3.6 Characteristics of academics

The academic is often a proud, arrogant and independent professional, richly reinforced by the status and attention the University community and society bestow upon their doctoral- level academic. As Riesman and Jencks (1962: 74 -119) note, the college represents a fellowship of educated men.

The academic is, however faced with extraordinarily limited job mobility. The infusion of new blood in the academic establishment via the addition of young faculty members occurs only through retirement of older faculty members. Universities and colleges must now work at keeping a largely middle aged tenured faculty educationally alive and growing during the next two to three decades. Gaff (1976) as quoted by Thoreson (1984:125) further documents the frustrations of the faculty resulting from:

- the tightest job market in decades;
- the difficulty of older faculty members in obtaining tenure; and
- a series of drastic budget cuts that have adversely affected departmental programmes and faculty morale.

Prior to 1960's and 1970's low salaries and consequent economic pressures had, always been a salient issue of academics. Scholarship is another area which creates problems for academics. Scholarship, as Jones (1979: 429 -438) aptly notes, represents much more than bookishness a passive act but involves a mastery, intellectual courage, and knowledge "on the highest possible plane that action which alone brings wisdom to the nations of wisdom, God knows, is what the nation wants and needs" (Jones, 1979:438).

3.6.1 Dual allegiance

Dual allegiance may create role confusion and conflict of interests for the academic. The role of the college professor includes both the opportunity for and problem of dual allegiance since academics are members of both a particular University faculty and a specific discipline. The academic is thus faced with professional versus institutional identification. This bifurcation in role has led to a major commitment by academics to off-campus activities and constituencies that consume considerable time and energy (for instance, for the professor at risk, it provides an unparalleled opportunity to spend "hidden" time off campus away from the scrutiny of colleagues and students in the socially sanctioned high drinking habitat found at conferences and conventions (Hosokawa, 1990: 126).

3.6.2 Sub-roles for college-teachers

Adelson (1962:396 - 417) examined the topic of sub-roles of college teachers and made use of anthropological analogy from the study of the " healer " role. He identified three types of roles:

The teacher as shaman. The teacher's orientation is narcissistic. He stresses charm, skill and the involvement of his personality, which results in a charismatic teacher, who is powerful, energetic, and committed.

The teacher as priest. The teacher claims power by virtue of his membership of a powerful or admirable discipline such as physics, psychology and classical scholarship.

The teacher as mystic healer. The mystic healer finds the distress in the patient's personality and cures the patient by helping eradicate the flaws.

Each of these roles carries with it seeds of destructive behaviour, such as drinking excessively, isolation and boredom, precursors of alcoholic drinking, are thus endemic to the life of the college professor. Katz (1962: 365 - 395) points out that classroom teaching carries with it inevitable frustration, and, often, insufficient challenge, resulting in demoralization.

3.6.3 Issues of mid- life development

Du Plessis (1991: 203) mentions that within life-transitions, status and role demands change. In this respect Gould (1972) and Levinson (1978) as cited by Thoreson (1984: 128) have identified the following developmental changes that human beings go through:

- leaving the family - occurring between the ages of 18 and 22;
- getting into the adult world- running its course between ages of 22 to 29;
- settling down - beginning in the 30s;
- mid-life transition - occurring around 40-45;
- middle- adulthood- occurring around 45-60;

- late-adulthood - occurring around 60 - 65; and
- late adulthood- 65 and beyond.

Problems of mid-life among men in general seem to be more pronounced and have been recognised by Vermeulen (2001:11) as well. She claims that men have been taught to base their self-image on what they acquire. This is why many males - when approaching mid-life - often trade their car and wife in for newer models.

Since the majority of faculty members are in the mid-life transition (Hide et al, 1999:113), middle-adulthood or late -adult -transition where the disengagement process in male development occurs and risk to alcoholism increases. These phases include: coping with the loss of illusion and the scaling down of their "dream" to fit current job realities.

According to Gross (1977;752 - 755), a cardinal characteristic of the mid-life crisis is the significant decline in creativity as well as a gradual loss of real intelligence. Other characteristics include feelings of being lost or betrayed by one's own dreams, and feelings of failure and emptiness. At this stage men often enter into relationship with younger women. Men, more typically than women, leave their marriages and are objects of great moral outrage. Divorce, depression, *ennui* and alcohol abuse are rather typical developmental crises. Alcohol, insinuating itself in the life of the academic at mid- life transition, can serve to assuage the academic's pain and help maintain a tenuous grasp of the fading dream, however epidemiological research is needed to validate these clinical impressions.

3.7 Characteristics of academe that create alcohol abuse

The work environment of academics, namely the University, has characteristics that make academic staff vulnerable to problems of alcohol abuse amongst others. The following are some of the conducive factors to alcohol abuse and alcoholism as observed by Thoreson, (1984:130-131):

- low visibility and minimal supervision of the academician;
- myths about the academic as a Renaissance scholar, unfettered by performance demands,

inscrutable and

- undaunted by the problems of mere mortals;
- a quasi-indentured status in an environment which provides maximum security and minimum opportunities for advancement for both academic and non-academic employees;
- the collegial relationships within departments, minimizing social distance between academic supervisors and their academician-employees, which severely limits the capacity of the supervisor to manage;
- tenure which seriously diminishes the threat of job loss as a motivator, which is the *sine qua non* in successful industrial alcoholism programmes;
- a remarkably unchanging and stable work force, accompanied by boredom and the frustration of slowly but inexorably eroding salaries and status; and
- an aging professoriate now concentrated in the 45-65 age range where mid- stage alcoholism predominates.

Other risk factors observed by Thoreson (1984:131) include :

- the extension of the principle of academic freedom to the area of performance standards. The effect of this is that job performance which bears no discernible relationship to academic freedom is " wrapped within its mantle, sacrosanct and beyond evaluation" (Compare Thoreson, 1984:131);
- the elusive definition of non performance itself creates a serious barrier (Compare Hide et al, 1999: 115). There is a disinclination, verging on a point of honour among academics, to specify in operational terms what is expected of an academic.

- the notion of cost-effectiveness is anathema to the academic community and efforts to contain costs via the current emphasis on "academic business managers" found in institutions of higher learning seem to have served mainly to create a costly bureaucracy, instead of producing reasonable performance standards.
- the respect for individuality, an integral part of academe, is applied with equal vigour to the personal characteristics of the faculty, making a rarity of confrontation of a colleague about problems such as destructive drinking and severe health problems; and
- the academic community holds a positive view of drinking as a part of gracious living, any attempt to single out patterns of alcohol abuse is subject to either extreme defensiveness or indifference (Compare Hide et al, 1999:115).

3.8 Barriers to identifying alcohol problems amongst academics

It is not easy to identify problems of the excessive use of alcohol amongst academic staff. Roman (1980:143) identifies four barriers to recognizing alcohol problems among faculty members:

- a paucity of success in the measurement of academic performance;
- guild- like protection of faculty;
- a limited distance between faculty and their supervisors, and
- minimal agreement on what constitute good performance.

Other characteristics of the academic environment include the difficulty to distinguish between the natural tailing off of performance of the ageing academic from significant job deterioration. Also, the freedom from close supervision and time demands offers the opportunity for significant abuse by mediocre faculty members. Another significant factor is the limited teaching load of senior faculty. In major universities, senior faculty have teaching loads which rarely exceed six (6) hours per week. The remainder of the time is "hidden time" free of scrutiny by university administrators. Hidden time in academe, so necessary for scholarly writing and research, also constitute an ideal

circumstance for the development of alcoholism. Mandell (1977) as cited by Thoreson (1984:132) says that alcohol is the number one hazard in the life of the professor, and the rewarding of tenure is especially devastating to the recipient alcoholic, who is now, with tenure insulated from any previous restraints and chisels on duties hereto fore considered irreducible. Robe (1977: 42 -57) on the other hand believes that professionals such as doctors, attorneys, and professors who are afforded extra status, privilege and attention by society are given sanction by the status to create complex and plausible rationalizations for their abusive drinking. The academic is perhaps described as one who is barely supervised and basically unsupervisable.

3.9 Selling the disease concept

Madsen (1984:151) noted that alcoholism is a disease and the alcoholic is a sick person who has lost complete control over his drinking pattern and trying to "sell" the idea of alcoholism as a "disease" to an academic audience is a herculean task.

Linguistically, the seller needs to explain why it is a disease. Further, the academic has ego-involved dogmas associated with his or her discipline that will further make the disease concept totally unacceptable. Combined with these attitudes most academics are brilliant individuals who can for years hide the fact of their abnormal drinking (Madsen, 1984:151-153).

Even when the alcoholic professor is willing to seek help, this is usually sought far from the University setting. Matters of pride, fears of scorn, and felt threats to one's career will lead to the alcoholic to seek treatment as remote from the University setting as possible.

3.10 The attitudes and drinking styles of academic staff

The disease of alcoholism is caused by among other things, the academic's drinking styles and attitudes. On most campuses drinking has long been a fashionable pastime on most campuses. Professors are as susceptible to snobbery with its associated mannerisms as are rock stars. For many sub- groups within the professional ranks, fairly heavy drinking bouts are a means of not only seeking relief from the general anxieties of life, but perform a vital function of creating group

solidarity and removing tensions between colleagues who may have had differences in ideological or administrative matters (Madsen, 1984:151).

Many departmental get-togethers now serve wine rather than hard liquor, while at some, non-alcoholic alternatives are not available. Despite the growing toleration of moderation, abstainers are still regarded as a bit strange and often as undesirable colleagues. There are of course other pressures that an abstainer must overcome on campus. The tensions to make tenure through the publish or perish syndrome cause enormous stress, periods of prolonged work, and the need to "unwind". Alcohol serves this purpose well. Combined with the rites of strengthening social bonds through drinking activities, these constitute powerful motives for drinking heavily. Tolerance for abstinence is increasing, but the abstainer is, nonetheless, an outsider to many of the more intensive professional recreational activities (Madsen, 1984:152).

Acceptability of the concept of alcoholism varies enormously among the disciplines involved, the differences in campus settings and individual variation.

3.11 A typology for academic, executive and professional alcoholics

The following factors cause destructive drinking among academic, executive and professional persons: firstly, the characteristics of academics and academe intertwine to produce an ecological system that is, paradoxically, requisite to a community of scholars and the development of alcohol abuse. Since the academics are no longer cherished by society, they often face the bitterness of their broken dreams. In addition, they also work in an environment of low supervision, low visibility of performance, freedom from time demands, with vaguely defined and non-enforced standards of performance, a veritable Mecca for both scholarship and alcohol abuse (Hosokawa 1990:124 -125)

The altering of conscious awareness and attempts to create a higher consciousness are indigenous to the human condition. The altering of conscious awareness can be induced either externally by drugs or internally through meditation, exercise and music. The academic who is involved in matters of the mind and intellectual pursuits is particularly prone to look toward ways of enhancing

and enlarging his understanding of the world and altering his awareness.

This characteristic is enhanced by the fact that embedded in the folklore of our society is a belief in the myth of the drunken poetic genius which implies that tormentedness, madness and genius go hand in hand with excessive drinking.

Second, the academic is often characterized by monumental self absorption.

Third, the academic is often characterized by adherence to the myth of infinite power and invulnerability. This myth of the invincibility and power, the "demand for absolutes" - is the denial of essential limitation.

Fourth, the absence of either acceptance or the honest sharing of mutual vulnerabilities remains a serious problem for the arrogant, skeptical academic.

Fifth, partially based upon intellectual prowess and partially upon the pretense of invulnerability, the academic struggles to maintain a facade of imperviousness to personal problems especially since his/her creative spark of is rooted in an obsessive, perfectionistic drive towards new knowledge.

The following typology according to Thoreson (1984:133) applies to faculty in the academic environment:

- **The twenty widgets per hour problem.** Practicing alcoholics are often high performers in their academic careers. Since job performance standards are set at a fairly low level, the alcoholic can drop off substantially in performance and, as compared to his/her peers, still be above average.
- **The former superstar:** Alcoholics often live on their prior reputation and contributions.

- **Over compensators:** Alcoholics tend to overcompensate, especially during the mid- stage of alcoholism. That is, alcoholics tend to become work-obsessive and concentrate on aspects of the job that are quite visible to their superiors.
- **The senior professor syndrome:** There is a reluctance on the part of either peers or academic administrators to confront senior-level tenured professors about negative behaviour.

Thoreson (1984:133-134) noted the following as indicators of job deterioration among professionals and executives that signal alcoholism:

- **a narrowing of job performance.** The alcoholic performs as well as he/she did in previous years, only in a much narrower domain;
- **work task simplification.** The quality of work is still relatively high, but the tasks completed are pedestrian in nature;
- **dependence on previous learning.** The remote memory of the academic alcoholic is intact, but his/her short- term memory for current events is impaired;
- **students complaints.** Complaints by students about teachers are legion. Students complaints will focus on the professor's arrogance, confusion, and outdated lectures;
- **surprising gaffe** or departure from high performance. An example of this would be a professor who blacks out and forgets to give final examinations;
- **irregular (or non-existent) office hours.** The tendency toward outdated lectures and irregular office hours is so common among academic faculty that it is impossible to distinguish alcoholism from laziness solely on this basis;

- **increased obsession** (and reduced efficiency) with work to the exclusion of all other activities;
- **chronic, free floating anxiety** and low self-esteem seem common to virtually all such alcoholics;
- a greater **emphasis on telephone contact** to the neglect of face-to-face conversation; and
- **meticulous attention to dress** (in the middle stages) and neglect of appearance and dress (in the late stages).
- **physical signs, serious accidents, injury and health problems.** In the more advanced stages there will be cigarette burns on clothing, bruises, facial varices, cuts, tremors and health problems.

Symptoms such as these certainly require intervention programmes.

3.12 Intervention methods

There are quite a number ways for developing intervention programmes. Thoreson (1984: 13-140) suggests the following intervention methods:

- the nature of the academics with alcohol problems makes them highly resistant to the recognition and acceptance of having problems with alcohol. At the same time, the academic alcoholic's work obsession makes them highly receptive to developmental kinds of services found in the Employee Assistance Model. The EAP developmental model accommodates itself to the role of the family in coercing the academic alcoholic into treatment; to the use of finesse, rather than confrontation, in breaking down the alcoholic's denial system; and to the need of the academic for educational programmes that offer skills mastery.

- the model stresses multiple avenues of referral, e.g. self, peer, family and supervisor; multiple levels, from acute crisis and problem management to educational enhancement; and multiple types, from personal, marital / family to financial, legal, stress, alcohol, harassment and discrimination, to burn out and mid career change.
- although successful in the industrial setting as a means of frightening the worker into treatment, the supervisor confrontation model from industrial EAPs is not especially workable the "in-sauce" academic. A lack of distance between academic supervisor and academic faculty, protection of tenure, a lack of demonstrable job performance standards, and a lack of interest in job efficiency mitigate the threat of job loss in academe.
- recovered academic alcoholics need to be looked to as a resource in EAP programs in higher education, particularly on a volunteer, informal basis. This is an essential prerequisite to moving the academic professional to the shared vulnerability and shared strengths of fellowship with other recovering alcoholics, a cornerstone of the AA programme ("I cannot do it, but we can").
- EAP programmes in higher education need to have available to them staff and other resource people with alcohol interest and the capacity to assume leadership roles. Much of the effectiveness of an EAP in promoting alcoholic recovery is contingent upon the ongoing activity of EAP leadership on a college campus in fostering educational programmes and an increasing awareness of the issues, concerns and treatment options in alcoholism.
- it is more effective to provide for the academic a model of services that involves an educative-faculty development component than to focus exclusively on alcoholism.

To conclude, we often talk about the fact that we have a labour intensive industry, and a need for salary increases because we are mindful of the relationship between salary and morale. It means that if we really do have a labour intensive industry, we need to pay attention to people, because

their morale is going to determine what is accomplished in that institution. Moreover, we need to pay attention to staff, a much neglected group, to focus more on the need for productive working relationships, for an environment in which people can grow.

Finally we have too often focused our attention on such mundane concerns as parking, office space, salaries, sabbatical leave, or fringe benefits to the neglect of the psychological climate, the environment in which people work.

3.13 Institutional Constraints

Wyers and Kaulukukui (1984: 170) found the barriers to the development of services in work sites reflected those in the following table, placed in a ranking order. It is significant to note that a lack of money is the first obstacle to be overcome when one thinks of establishing a programme:

Table 2: Barriers to the development of services in work sites, in rank and order

Barrier	Number giving response	Percentage giving response
Lack of money	40	70
Services inappropriate at work site	15	29
Lack of management interest	14	27
Lack of worker interest	14	27
Lack of awareness	11	21
Lack of union interest	8	15
Other	8	15
Lack of expertise	7	14
Labour disputes	4	8
Don't know	1	2

3.14 Budgetary constraints

Schooling (1984:95) as well as Wyers and Kaulukukui (1984:170) maintain that the establishment of an EAP is subject to the same initiatory and survival constraints as any other programme with perhaps a few other hurdles thrown in as well.

There is no widely perceived need for an EAP since it is apparently assumed that counseling regarding personal problems is not the responsibility of the institution even though employee troubles adversely affect productivity and relationships within the institution. There is therefore no external pressure to establish such a programme. Accreditation visitation site teams are not likely to ask if the institution has an employee assistance service, and unlike athletics it is not a programme of major concern to alumni.

Budgetary limitations for every institution are persistent and real especially because inflation is producing serious budgetary imbalances. Most administrators would consider an EAP as a non mandatory budget item well below the priority designation assigned to utility costs or the repair of a leaky gymnasium roof. In priority ranking it is usually placed well below other non- mandatory priority needs such as improved salaries to meet escalating living costs or the demands of unions, matching research funds to further an accepted mission of the institution, the continuation or expansion of a service programme that has the support of highly vocal and effectively organized groups who are influential and possess political clout, the maintenance of acceptable faculty-student ratios, expanded student health or recreational services, necessary expenditure to meet government regulations or guidelines such as making provision for the handicapped, or the correction of safety hazards where there may be a violation of governmental regulations.

The point is that generating and allocating financial support for an EAP in these difficult budgetary times is not an easy task for any college or university administrator.

3.15 Denial

According to Yamatani, Santagelo, Maue and Heath (1999:108). Highly educated professors and researchers tend to deny that they need personal assistance, even when coping with serious personal problems, while there is furthermore the tendency, for institutions to refrain from admitting that they have staff problems related to alcohol and drug abuse. It may be feared that establishing such a program would perhaps be a public admission of lack of administrative control and the presence of staff inefficiency (Schooling 1984:95).

3.16 Management is politicized

Management of higher education is becoming increasingly politicized (Baldrige 1984:51) by being increasingly thrown into the arena of interest group politics and so any new programme is going to have to compete with other programmes for attention, money, resources, physical space and for legitimacy.

3.17 Centralization of authority

In folklore about the university community, the decision-making process took place within the collegium of academic personnel. If that ever really existed, it clearly does no longer. Increasingly, decisions are being made at higher and higher levels in the hierarchy. Where department chairpersons used to make decisions, new division heads or college dean currently make them (Baldrige 1984: 52).

3.18 Options to explore

Baldrige (1984:51) is pessimistic about organizational changes at universities and the following statement captures his observation: "The history of academic innovation is a history of failure". This kind of pessimism negates the essence of Universities as institutions of higher learning in pursuit of knowledge through the dispassionate pursuit of rigorous research.

Various options need to be studied to bring about organizational development. These options may involve the elimination of a student recreational program or a faculty lecture series in order to fund women's athletics or an employee assistance program. The options may not be desirable ones but they do exist.

3.19 Budget Strategies

Whereas (Schooling 1984: 95; Wyers and Kaulukukui (1984:170) identified obstacles in the initiation of programmes, Baldrige (1984: 96 - 99) who actually suggested the following alternatives:

The first approach is to identify the programme as being essential to the welfare of the institution. The second strategy is to emphasize the feasibility of the proposal. There should be evidence that the proposal is workable while a report of a successful experience from elsewhere is essential. It would also be helpful to know the expected consequences of the programme and how soon and in what way the consequences will be observable.

A third strategy is to identify the timeliness of the proposal, to suggest that this is an idea for which time has come. Obviously, current conditions would be cited that make the immediate implementation of the proposal highly desirable if not mandatory.

A fourth strategy is to identify the personnel resources that would be required.

A fifth strategy is identifying the availability of space that may be required to house the programme.

A sixth strategy is the presentation of honest and realistic cost estimates and indications of possible fund resources for the programme.

3.20 Summary of the findings

The following main points have been examined in this chapter which has investigated Universities as employing organizations:

- Universities are places of employment;
- Universities are legal personalities;
- Universities have three major responsibilities: teaching, research and the public service function.
- management of Universities is in the hands of professionals and is highly politicised;
- Universities tend to be goal diffuse;
- decisions in Universities are made by committees;
- there is fluid participation as most decisions are made by “amateurs”;
- there is an issue carousel as problems come and go;
- there is a garbage can syndrome since the longer it takes to make a decision the more the problems get piled up;
- conflict is common;
- there are rules for bringing about change and innovation in Universities;
- academics are faced with limited job mobility and this causes frustration;
- the academic is faced with the problem of dual allegiance since he/she has to identify with the institution as well as with the professional association;
- most academics are affected by issues of mid-life development;
- the University as a working environment makes academics susceptible to alcohol abuse;
- money is the biggest barrier in developing intervention programmes;
- there are, however, tried and tested strategies for overcoming resistance to development of programmes; and
- Universities often deny that their staff have problems.

3.21 Conclusion

This chapter investigated universities as employing organizations with special reference to their characteristics as employers, functions, problems as well as how to overcome them. A university is a big organization with a variety of linkages with societal institutions. Employees of universities may sometimes not get the support they get from this large organisation because the organization's interests surpass that of an individual employee.

The next chapter will provide an in-depth outline of the University of the North as an employer.