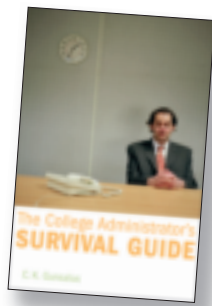


# The Bookshelf

Book Review Editor: Theodore J. Weidner, Ph.D., P.E., AIA

Every now and then, it's nice to reach out and see what others in higher education are reading, just in case it applies to facility officers. The first book reviewed applies more to academic administrators, though a senior facility officer may find it helpful. The second book, reviewed by my favorite training professional, Suzanne Drew, looks at improving workplace performance. As we enter a new academic year, I hope these books prove to be useful.



**The College Administrator's Survival Guide**, by C. K. Gunsalus, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2006, 225 pages, hardcover, \$21.95.

Reviewed by Theodore J. Weidner, Ph.D., P.E., AIA

**This book** is more for the top administration in facilities, because of its focus for academic department heads, but it has relevance in a number of other ways. In *Survival Guide*, C. K. Gunsalus

*Ted Weidner is assistant vice chancellor of facilities management & planning at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and president of Facility Asset Consulting. E-mail him at [tweidner2@unl.edu](mailto:tweidner2@unl.edu). Suzanne Drew is the director of staff development and management at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. E-mail her at [sdrew2@unl.edu](mailto:sdrew2@unl.edu).*



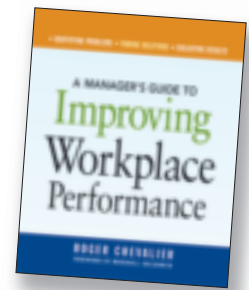
presents a number of challenging situations a college administrator, particularly at a research university, may face in a position or career, and ways to handle them to avoid future problems including lawsuits. I'd like to think each one of the situations is a complete fabrication of a nearly impossible event, however recent experience proves otherwise.

The book is a primer for a new academic administrator, a sort of "what-to-do-now" book for a department head faced with supervising colleagues. For instance, what do you do when a colleague is really a bully, sexual harasser, or pseudo power broker? While the subjects of the examples are in the academic ranks and have some unique academic situations (i.e., research publication plagiarism), they are also in the facilities arena.

Regardless of the details of the situation, the examples all require the administrator to listen with an open mind, recognize that many problems cannot be solved alone, utilize systems and processes to address problems, and above all else stay focused on the overall goals of the department and college. These repre-

sent many of the same techniques emphasized in APPA's Leadership Academy.

While the book is an enjoyable read, it has some limitations for facility administrators. It provides an insight to some of the challenges an academic department head faces, what I consider one of the most difficult jobs in higher education. There may be some tips and techniques that a facility officer can use if recently pulled up from the professional ranks or to use when facing a challenging situation. However, in my mind, there are better resources for facility officers than this well-written book for academics who are new to the administrative ranks.



**A Manager's Guide to Improving Workplace Performance**, by Roger Chevalier, AMACOM, New York, 2007, 199 pages, hardcover, \$19.95.

Reviewed by Suzanne Drew, FMP

**Change can** be hard. Getting other people to change can be even harder. However, having a well thought out, well researched, and well documented approach can give even the most apprehensive manager the confidence and ability they need. It is such a framework that author Roger Chevalier provides in *A Manager's Guide to Improving Workplace Performance*. The secret to improving

performance in individuals or work-groups, says the author, is to know where to focus your efforts.

Research indicates that environmental factors contribute to 85 percent of individual performance problems. Opportunity to improve workplace performance lies not in trying to change employees, but in modifying the work environment. The environmental factors—which

have the most influence on performance—involve the provision of information, resources, and incentives to do the right things.

Communicating clear expectations and standards takes many forms, all of which are required to reinforce each other: written expectations for both what employees do and how they do it; ongoing, timely, and accurate observation and feedback; and coach-

ing based on the employee's needs and motivations. Regarding resources, employees need not only adequate equipment and time, processes, and procedures, but also a physically and psychologically safe, clean, and organized work area. The last element required is well aligned and communicated incentives for specific, measurable behaviors and outcomes. Whether the incentives are financial or opportunities to do meaningful work and/or master new skills, if employees have an environment in which they trust that they have a real chance for success, and they have the information and resources to do so, the overwhelming number of employees will perform if not excel.

Of the 15 percent of situations where the cause of the performance problem lies with the individual, the issues usually have to do with adequate skills and knowledge and/or willingness to use and share them, capacity to learn, and motivation that matches the realities of both the job and the organization. While these factors may be beyond the influence of supervisors, the impact they have on the workplace ultimately remains under the leader's control. After all, as managers, one our primary responsibilities to our teams is to ensure the right make up of team members through both selecting strong contributors and de-selecting those who inhibit the success of others.

Throughout the book, the author provides worksheets and application exercises to help the reader immediately apply the concepts and strategies discussed. He also provides excellent explanations of some must-know concepts and theories regarding motivation, coaching, and the Situational Leadership Model, which should be foundational for anyone who works with or through others.

As managers, we play many roles: coach, leader, counselor, motivator, and team builder. With this resource, Roger Chevalier provides an accessible and useful guide to help us understand, build confidence, and make the most of the opportunity. ¶



**Rental Solutions**

What would be lost if a building's HVAC or Power system were to break down for a lengthy period? Tenants, revenue, or even life! These systems are such an integral part of our everyday life that even temporary shutdowns are unacceptable. The solution - **Carrier Rental Systems.**

**Typical Applications**

- Supplemental Tower Water
- Supplemental Heating
- Supplemental Steam
- Temp. HVAC Systems
- Backup HVAC Systems
- Comfort Cooling
- Clean Room Humidity Control
- Water Damage Drying
- Emergency Power
- Construction Site Humidity and Ventilation Control

For additional information and equipment specifications, check our web site [www.hvacportablesystems.com](http://www.hvacportablesystems.com) or call 800-586-9020 today and find out why we are "The Ones to Call!"

**800-586-9020**  
[www.hvacportablesystems.com](http://www.hvacportablesystems.com)

**Carrier**  
**Rental Systems**  
 New Name. Same Great Solutions.

A Subsidiary of Carrier Corporation. Formerly doing business as HVAC Portable Systems.