

## **Empowering Relationships Workshop Organizational Communication Scenario**

Although Zandoc College had growing pains over its 40-year history, the accrediting agency recently identified communication as one of its greatest challenges. The president employed a new vice president of Academic Affairs (Dr. Botwell), to guide the academic component and build relationships that would minimize conflicts and support a climate of learning and growth. When introduced to the faculty and staff, the vice president stated that he was looking forward to engaging them in strategic initiatives at the campus and state levels. He was scheduled to speak at the state's annual academic meeting in six months. As a follow-up to this announcement, he asked the dean of the School of Education (Dr. Miller) to review some publications on developing faculty leadership and to submit a paragraph on two articles or books to incorporate into his speech within two weeks. The dean accepted the task, although the deans were engaged in college-wide registration activities during that period. Consequently, the dean did not submit her responses to the vice president until the end of the second week. The vice president was upset and called the dean to his office to state that the information was not only late, but it did not meet standards. The dean requested guidance on exactly what the vice president was looking for. However, the only guidance given was "this just isn't right. You know what should be in it." The dean asked again for criteria that the vice president expected and received no guidance. She was to 'handle it' and submit the document within the next week. Without any guidance, the dean did her best to anticipate what she was being asked to submit by reading some available prior speeches by the vice president. She resubmitted the document within four days. Again, the vice president was dissatisfied and exploded with "Can't you do anything right?" The dean was mystified. Dr. Miller felt like the task was a designed-to-fail situation. What should she do? She consulted with her colleagues for possible guidance and they did not have any insights based on their experiences with the vice president. The dean tried to anticipate the criteria again, submitting the two reviews for the third time. This submission was not accepted and the vice president informed her that he would do it himself.