



LEADERSHIP ARCHIVE

Prepared for the Bachelor of Science in Communication and Leadership

Name and current title of the leader: William McRaven, Chancellor of the University of Texas System, retired Navy Admiral

CV or resume here or at the end of this document:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_H._McRaven,

<https://www.utsystem.edu/chancellor/biography>, <http://www.achievement.org/achiever/admiral-william-h-mcraven/>

Describe the nature of the organization, agency, or other structure being led by this person:

The University of Texas System is a network of multiple universities, including the flagship University of Texas at Austin. When he was on active duty, McRaven was commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command, and best known as the mastermind of the raid that killed Osama Bin Laden.

In what sense is this a leader for social improvement?

As Chancellor of the UT System, he oversees an organization that is primarily concerned with serving the state of Texas and with educating its students. As Admiral, he was centrally involved in the national security and defense of the United States. As commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, McRaven spearheaded the creation of the Preservation of the Force & Family initiative to ensure the mental, spiritual and physical well-being of those who serve, as well as their families.

Describe in detail the challenges faced by this leader in communicating.....

Within the organization Both the UT System, and even more so the Navy, are very hierarchical, large, complex institutions. In both cases McRaven had to communicate effectively with those who report to him, but he also had powerful groups over him to which he had to report. This creates quite a delicate balancing act within an organization.

With the public McRaven was thrust into the spotlight because of the bin Laden raid. It was important that he communicate directly and factually with the public while not laying any claim to policy decisions, which of course were the president's. As Chancellor, he is the face of higher education in Texas, and must articulate to the public and to government leaders what the System is trying to accomplish and how it can serve Texas. Early in 2017, McRaven used his bully pulpit to defend journalism to the public in the wake of Trump's accusations of fake news.

Specify how those challenges arise from the management of knowledge and information

As Chancellor, McRaven is often asked to provide information to the public and to government, as is the case with UT's involvement with affirmative action legal cases. For much of the public, the operations of both the UT System and the Navy may seem opaque, even mythic. Totally open communication is in many cases impossible for legal

or security reasons, so his role has often been to choose carefully what sort of information he will share.

Identify ethical challenges faced by this leader in communicating Any senior military commander must take positions and advocate policies that will put men and women in harm's way, and so in articulating plans of action he has confronted ethical implications. As Chancellor it has sometimes seemed best to take somewhat independent courses of action without first seeking approval of the Regents, his governing board. This is the consequence of any very large institution like UT System.

Which effective strategies of communication is this leader known for, especially in the management of knowledge and information? McRaven is especially skilled at using everyday examples to make points of larger importance. This gives a familiar and friendly tone to his speaking at the same time that he maintains the gravitas of an Admiral or a Chancellor. For instance, his 2014 Commencement Address at UT-Austin, linked below, drew important life lessons from the everyday experiences of a Navy Seal in training.

What are some weaknesses or shortcomings in this leader's style? Some have argued, see comments and criticisms below, that McRaven has faced some challenges in style, moving from a senior military command to Chancellor. As a commander, he has been more empowered to take decisive action and make decisions. As Chancellor, he has sometimes found that style runs into conflict with political interests in the state.

Summarize, and then copy at the end of this document or in external links, some key examples of speeches, press releases, blogs, and so forth that illustrate the leader's ability to communicate well in managing knowledge and information:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6OoCaGsz94>, <http://taskandpurpose.com/adm-mcraven-this-will-go-down-as-the-greatest-generation-of-the-21st-century/>,
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2017/02/23/greatest-threat-to-democracy-commander-of-bin-laden-raid-slams-trumps-anti-media-sentiment/?utm_term=.41cd47b6667a;
<https://www.utsystem.edu/offices/chancellor/blog/journalism-essential-democracy>;
<https://moody.utexas.edu/academics/degree-programs/communication-leadership/guest-speakers>

Summarize, and then copy at the end of this document or in external links, some key examples of news articles, online commentary, and so forth by the public that show reactions and critiques to the leader's attempts to communicate well in managing knowledge and information:

<https://www.texastribune.org/2017/05/18/ut-chancellor-mcraven-faces-increased-scrutiny-end-his-contract-nears/>, <http://breakingdefense.com/2016/07/whats-eating-bill-mcraven-is-congress-too-ignorant-of-military/>, <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/politics/2012/02/navy-seal-commander-advised-to-get-the-hell-out-of-the-media/>

