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by Z Z

Submission date: 06-Aug-2020 08:22PM (UTC+0530)

Submission ID: 1366584528

File name: liberty_university.edited.docx (20.62K)

Word count: 969

Character count: 5835

Liberty University

Name

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Liberty University

For every organization to be managed and operate successfully they need to have well-developed strategies. Strategic planning plays a critical role in the success of an organization. Furthermore, organizations can control the challenges they face through planning and enhance their operation by having the right staff with the required skills to facilitate the operations and allocating finances where required. However, there are always challenges that occur thus hindering development and implementation of strategic plans. This paper will focus on liberty university brief history and purpose as well as leadership issues and how it affects its strategic management.

⁷ Liberty University was established in 1971 by Elmer Towns and Jerry Falwell. The university was started as ¹ Lynchburg Baptist College which later in 1976 changed to Liberty Baptist College. In ¹ 1980, the college attained sanctions with the Southern Association of colleges whereby 1985 the institution was documented as a fully qualified university. Thus, allowed the institution to add more programs and gain acknowledgment from the conventional culture and the whole educational industry. Furthermore, in the same year, the institution initiated an online program to be undertaken by people who are far from the university and called it Liberty University Online (Pracht, 2019). Upon the death of Jerry Falwell, one of the founders ⁴ in 2007, his son Jerry Falwell Jr. took over as the chancellor and president of the university. Nevertheless, the education industry of Liberty University has been a successful journey moving from the impossible to the possible.

The educational industry has always worked towards providing knowledge to students and enhance ethical standards. Furthermore, leadership is a skill that needs to be learned and understood so that leaders can provide guidance to their followers and influence them positively.

Due to excellent leadership, Liberty University has achieved to accentuate the quest of knowledge in every discipline. Besides, the university has grown from a college with one hundred and fifty-four students to a university with a residential student body of more than fifteen thousand. Also, Liberty University has 15 schools and colleges and provides over seven hundred educational programs ranging from certificate to the doctoral level. Being a university that believes in one God, it has managed to influence the behavior of the students and thus develop a Christian centered individual with values, skills and knowledge that are vital in the real world. The mission for Liberty University is “to be ⁶ committed to academic excellence and training champions for Christ.” While its mission is to develop Christian centered individuals with values, skills and knowledge important to make changes to the world. Although the university has focused on different training programs, its purpose is to use the developed programs, services and collaborations to educate people who will make crucial contributions to their workplaces and societies as well as to glorify God (Gauldin, 2019).

The university leadership is held by the president who is Jerry Falwell with nine executive leaders and nineteen senior leaders. The potential competitors at Liberty University are other academic institutions within the university and offer similar courses such as Oregon State University, Duke University, Princeton University and Wheaton College.

An item that affects the institution and poses a challenge to its strategy is the leadership issue. The president of the University Jerry Falwell leads the university with strategies of silencing students and other staff such as professors who do not conform to his pro-trump politics, although as president of the university should be involved in decisions but not about the articles written by communication students about the school. Young (2019) has always been involved in writing articles about the school, however, ever since the president got involved with

the content developed, he has been opposing content that does not support the administration. As a result, the administration led by Jerry Falwell has been interfering with the coverage, passing through provocative articles as well as protecting their reputation by removing critical actualities from the stories.

Although Young worked towards ensuring the freedom and integrity of journalism, the university administration still intervened and could not provide the independence of journalism. The president provided leadership in form of dictatorial style which required every story developed to pass through the assistant for review. Thus, allowed every leader or professor mentioned in the article to have the authority to edit any part of the story by changing and adding what they wanted (Young, 2019). The leadership issue made it hard for the school of communication to strategize their plans and focus on enhancing their work since their integrity and independence were interfered with.

Moreover, the leadership issue is also indicated when the university president calls the newsroom to personally direct the coverage (Young, 2019). Through poor leadership, the school of communication was controlled by the top leaders hence grasping the control of its information to be presented. Additionally, this has resulted in student journalist to ⁵sign a nondisclosure agreement to restrict them from writing or talking publicly about the administrative instructions and oversight choice as well as information selected as intimate. Besides, the agreement allows the student journalist to be honored to get opinions from administrators.

In summation, Liberty University is a university that has grown exponentially from being a college to a recognized educational institution. Although it has passed through several hardships towards its progress, the institution has achieved a lot through its strategic plans and belief. However, the increased leadership issues brought by the administration and president

Jerry Falwell through interfering with the school of communication have brought challenges in the department.

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