Transnational Education: Developing Leadership Capability

Module B – Component 4 narrative:

Martin is about to resign from his teaching role at an Australian university. For ten years he has been unit coordinator for a large first year unit delivered in four different locations, the largest being the university's branch campus. The enrolments, and consequently, Martin’s responsibilities had grown significantly, to the point where, for the last two years he coordinated a large team of tutors across all locations. While the delivery of the unit had not always been smooth sailing, gradually, problems were resolved and students teaching surveys had improved quite markedly over those last two years.

Martin travelled a lot when each new location started delivering the unit. Although the unit was pretty much fully online, he inducted and then co-taught with local staff until they were able to take over. The travel was often very stressful with weekend teaching followed by immediate teaching when he returned to the Australian campus. It was only after two intensive years of work that he found that he could have claimed time off for travelling and weekend work but had not been advised of this.

To keep in touch with the large team of tutors and to stay on top of any potential problems, he contacted staff at each location every two weeks. He also developed a unique moderation process whereby staff at each location contributed to the design of assessment and then undertook marking exercises to ensure that marking procedures were consistent across all locations.

Having been employed as a Level B academic, Martin decided to apply for promotion. His application relied heavily on the responsibilities and leadership that he had shown in establishing, growing and maintaining the unit at the different locations. His application however was turned down as he had not met the university’s requirements for research. In his mind, the leadership that he had shown in undertaking his offshore responsibilities were not only not recognised, they appeared to have been undervalued. Martin decided that he would look towards another career.

Discussion:

* What type of leader was Martin?

* Had Martin decided to stay at the University, what should be his next actions/goals/aims?