

CREATE ENERGY CENTER LEADER SHARES IDEAS FOR KEEPING GRANT-FUNDED PROJECTS

In the 21 years Dr. Kenneth A. Walz has taught at [Madison Area Technical College](#) he has had just two presidents and two provosts. However, the deans and assistant deans, who have been his immediate supervisors, have changed a couple dozen times as people early in their careers move up the administrative ladder. He has an effective strategy for dealing with administrator turnover.

“Whether it’s a president or a provost or a dean, keep them informed about everything that you do,” Walz said in an interview for [CCPI-STEM’s](#) Models the Work project.

Walz is the director and principal investigator of the [CREATE Energy Center](#), an [Advanced Technological Education \(ATE\)](#) center at Madison Area Technical College in Wisconsin. In addition to receiving numerous federal and state grants, Walz has been named a U.S. Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Energy Educator of the Year by the Wisconsin Association for Environmental Education.

Whenever a new administrator comes on board, Walz introduces himself and establishes rapport during follow-up appointments where he explains CREATE’s mission “to produce a skilled technical workforce necessary to implement the transformation of the world’s energy industries.” CREATE’s programs empower two-year college faculty to teach new energy technologies to ensure American competitiveness in this fast-changing sector.

Walz also suggests community college faculty do the following to ensure that grant-funded initiatives are in synch with college operations:

- Seek administrators’ input on grant proposals.
- Keep the college’s top administrators and your immediate supervisors informed about your grant-funded work and your ideas for additional grant-funded projects.
- Serve on your college’s strategic planning and hiring committees.
- Introduce yourself to the college’s new president and other new key administrators, and make appointments to explain your project.
- Invite the college president and other administrators to your students’ presentations and industry advisors’ meetings.
- Engage early and often with all college staff members whose work includes your grant.
- Invite your college’s faculty to participate in your project’s professional development programs.

This material is based upon work supported by The National Science Foundation under ATE grant #2132510. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

