

Strong support from the board (and from the chancellor, for presidents in multi-college districts) is essential to mitigate the stress of the vote. CEOs who have and use personal and professional support systems are more likely to successfully cope with the vote. Family, friends, religious and spiritual connections, other CEOs, colleagues, the League, exercise, and good nutrition are important resources.

Some CEOs have reported that the votes have caused them to reflect on their leadership skills and styles and make some improvements. The dynamics that led to the vote provided important lessons for anticipating dissension, dealing with organizational change, and improving systems.

No confidence votes have also reinforced the courage, integrity, and leadership of the CEO due to his or her willingness to take a stand that was unpopular with certain groups.

Closing Thoughts

There are many forces behind no confidence votes and many possible responses to and results from the vote. Responding to such votes requires thoughtful analysis, courage, and integrity on the part of the CEO, the board of trustees, and those who sponsored the vote; it takes much hard work and good faith by all parties involved.

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