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FACULTY PROFILE



CRAIG COWLES

Craig Cowles, the new chair of the Management Science and Aviation Science Department, is one of those faculty members who followed a long and winding road that fortunately ended at Bridgewater State College. After receiving his Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry at the University of Kansas and doing post-doctoral work at the University of Nebraska, Craig embarked on a career in the corporate sector. At a number of major firms, from the chemical manufacturer American Cyanamid in New Jersey to Darworth Corporation (the makers of the water repellent stain Cuprinol) in Connecticut, Craig honed his skills as an operations manager, one of the most demanding jobs in the corporate hierarchy. While with Darworth, Craig obtained his Master's in Business Administration at the University of Hartford and so impressed his instructors that he was encouraged to take on teaching responsibilities. Needless to say, Craig was bitten by the teaching bug and saw the opportunity to share his years of experience as an operations manager with students.

With his interest in teaching and his background in the business world, Craig was a natural to come to Bridgewater in 1984 and become a valued member of the new management science program. Craig not only was an instant success in the classroom but began developing training programs for local businesses. Combining his past experience as a manager with his teaching skills, Craig constructed a number of programs at the Acushnet Co. in New Bedford and at Bay State Gas. He advised his clients on how they could better train new hires to perform their jobs and also retrain individuals who were being asked to take on unfamiliar tasks. With each training

program, Craig developed a video and a handbook that helped the trainees through their orientation. The combination of the video and the handbook helped to simplify the training process and assured a more complete understanding of the task required by the employer. For example, at the Acushnet Company Craig, along with education colleague Charles Robinson, developed a manual that was appropriate to the educational level of the workers at the plant. By gearing the training program to the specific needs of the client, Craig was able to fashion a successful program.

Craig's training programs, however, are not merely designed to improve the training process for corporate clients, but also serve as the basis of his classroom teaching. He is firmly committed to making classroom learning real and to ensuring that his students have a practical knowledge of the workplace. The experience he gains putting the training programs together is immediately brought back to Bridgewater so that students can be aware of how to become better managers and contribute to a more efficient and productive manufacturing process. Craig's keen sense of what works and what does not work in corporate-labor relations has been valuable to management science majors at the college.

Craig's next challenge at Bridgewater will be taking over as chair of the department. Already he has

developed an ambitious agenda, including greater emphasis on outreach to the business community in southeastern Massachusetts. He believes that Bridgewater has much to offer the region in terms of training and consulting. Also Craig is interested in developing new programs in management, particularly a Master's degree in management and a new undergraduate concentration in global management. Both programs are designed to prepare students in the region for the corporate challenges of the future.

Sitting and talking with Craig, one cannot help but be impressed with his energy and dedication. Like many of the faculty at Bridgewater, he is determined to prepare students for the ever-increasing demands of the business world and to use his experience as a basis for that preparation. The College and the region can only hope that Craig decides to continue serving his students and local businesses and not return to the winding road that started in Kansas.