**A Thought Experiment—Planning for the Future of IT**

October, 2015

It is October 2020, and you are the newly appointed CIO responsible for Able Innovation College (AIC), a progressive liberal arts college within Able State University. AIC is being restarted with a $300M endowment after being moth-balled since 1985. You have no computers, software, or computing infrastructure. The phones work in the office spaces, but the wiring is at least a half-century old. The College expects to reach full enrollment of 1750 by enrolling classes of 500 students each year beginning in 2025.

Your job is to have the information services ready to go when doors open in the fall of 2025.

*In small groups, consider one or more of the following questions:*

1. What technology options will be available seven to ten years from now? Which parts of the IT operation will have the most technology change? What will you no longer be doing?
2. Who will be providing which services? What will be provided by users themselves (through BYO)? What will be cloud or peer hosted? What will remain on-premise and IT provided?
3. The President makes 2 suggestions. What pros and cons do you present?
   1. A fully cloud-based CRM and ERP (e.g. Salesforce and Workday) as your core user-facing technology for student information, financials, HR, fundraising, etc.
   2. A crowd-sourced Helpdesk with advice sharing within your community and possibly with a regional or national consortium.
4. What skills or traits do you want to focus on acquiring as you hire your staff? You will have funding for 12 to 15 personnel. How will you allocate those positions? What will be done within your college and what will be provided by University IT?
5. How will you know whether you are successfully providing needed services and meeting community expectations?