PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

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Two key challenges of Academic Leadership (AL)

Possessing necessary skills in identifying learning programs, research initiatives, engagement projects, structures, approaches, priorities, quality improvements and strategic developments consistent with their mission.

Keeping up with the continuous movement in their operating context and make sure these agreed changes are put into practice successfully and sustained.
Issues in academic leadership

- Selection and development processes for AL are often unrelated to their daily realities.
- The nature and focus of leadership development programs don’t always address the capabilities that count.
- The central role of ALs in building a change capable culture is either unrecognized or misunderstood.
- Lack of a professional support system to develop their leadership skills, they largely rely on collegial and ad hoc supports in instances (Debrowksi and Blake, 2004; Orsmond & Stiles, 2002).

AL succession challenge (Scott et al. 2008)

- Not having a coherent succession plan of what is needed to fill the gap in high-level expertise that will result from this departure.
- The pool of potential leadership talent is decreasing, the urgency of putting in place change capable leaders is increasing.
ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP
ISSUES & CHALLENGES

- ALs have a critical role in managing continuous change while maintaining quality
  - Engage people in the process of personal and institutional change
  - Set up an efficient and supportive environment that fosters productive engagement
  - Reshape the operating context of their institutions to break resistance and accomplish openness to change capable.
  - Mobilize resources, material and tools for the success of change
**ALs CHANGE LEADERSHIP ROLE - CHALLENGES**

- "No room too lead": little time left to lead or to think and operate strategically
  - Complying with *bureaucratic and reporting* procedures that do not add value to achieve goals, operate strategies
  - Occupied by dealing with *complaints* arising from faulty systems or miscommunication
  - Involved in responding to *unexpected events* or attending *meetings* that are poorly formulated, chaired, or which have no outcome
Effectiveness of the leaders depends on the context surrounding them. Hence, they should be effective designers of the elements surrounding them (colleagues, management team etc.). However, their context is mostly shaped by other authorities (e.g. Turkey).

- The quality of their team
- Capacity and capability of the full organization
EXERCISE 1:

- Your perceptions of academic leadership?
  - What is academic leadership?
  - What do you think is a good academic leader?

- Why do they want to become AL?
  - What are the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators?

- Academic leaders’ practices at your institution (choose the level that you are most familiar with)
  - Present/share stories/cases if any o your reflections & expectations of the project
AL COMPETENCIES

- Management vs leadership competencies (expected performance) tend to be clustered into lists of key tasks to be performed and things to be known
  - budgeting and resource allocation;
  - curriculum and programs;
  - department administration;
  - external communication;
  - faculty affairs;
  - internal communication;
  - legal;
  - office management;
  - professional development;
  - staffing; and
  - student affairs.
AL CAPABILITY FRAMEWORK

- Personal Capabilities
- Interpersonal Capabilities
- Cognitive Capabilities

- Generic Competencies
- Role-specific Competencies

Capability

Competency
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
- Being able to measure their own emotional reactions to uncertainty and discomfort,
- Not to overreact, to tolerate uncertainty, and to be able to remain calm.
- Resolving tension, listen and responding appropriately to others and of reading social dynamics

SELF-REGULATION
- Judgement before resolving a problem
- Understanding strength and limitations,
- Admitting and learning from errors

DECISIVENESS
- Being willing to make a hard decision
- Being confident to take calculated risks
- Tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty

COMMITMENT
- Having energy, passion and enthusiasm for academic practices
- Wanting to achieve the best outcome possible
- Taking responsibility for program activities and outcomes
ALCF-INTERPERSONAL CAPABILITIES

Influencing

- Influencing people's behavior and decisions in effective ways
- Motivating others to achieve positive outcomes
- Developing and using networks of colleagues

Empathizing

- Empathizing and working productively with students from a wide range of backgrounds
- Listening to different points of view before coming to a decision
- Developing and contributing positively to a team-based program
ALFC-COGNITIVE CAPABILITY

**Diagnosis**
- Recognizing how seemingly unconnected activities are linked
- Recognizing patterns in a complex situation
- Identifying what the human as well as technical or administrative dimensions are

**Strategy**
- Seeing and then acting on an opportunity for a new direction
- Thinking creatively and laterally
- Seeing the best way to respond to a perplexing situation

**Flexibility & Responsiveness**
- Making sense of and learning from experience
- Knowing that there is never a fixed set of steps for solving workplace problems
- Adjusting a plan of action in response to problems
### ALCF-Generic and Role Specific Competencies

#### Learning & Teaching
- Understanding how to develop an effective program
- Understanding how to design and conduct an evaluation program
- Understanding how to implement successfully a new program

#### University Operations
- Understanding the role of risk management and litigation in his/her work
- Understanding how universities operate
- Having sound administrative and resource management skills

#### Self-Organization Skills
- Being able to manage ongoing professional learning & development
- Being able to organize work and manage time effectively
- Being able to make effective presentations to a range of different groups
EXERCISE 2: WHAT ARE THE KEY AL BEHAVIOURS?
ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES
Delivering presentations
Developing learning programs
Reviewing teaching activities
Scholarly research
Institutional research

NETWORKING
Liaising with external constituencies
Marketing activities
Networking within the University

MANAGING STAFF
Managing other staff
Reviewing people’s performance
Staff development

PLANNING AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT
Developing organizational processes
Developing policy
Identifying new opportunities

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR

MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION
Budget management
Chairing meetings
Dealing with complaints
Responding to ad hoc requests