Learning Leaders
in times of change

Academic Leadership Capabilities for Australian Higher Education

Geoff Scott, Hamish Coates & Michelle Anderson

May 2008

University of Western Sydney and
Australian Council for Educational Research

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About this study

> It is not as if we can avoid change, since it pursues us in every way. We might as well, then, make the best of it … The answer is not in avoiding change, but in turning the tables by facing it head on. The new mindset is to exploit change before it victimises us … We can learn to reject unwanted change more effectively, while at the same time becoming more effective at accomplishing desired improvements. Grappling with educational change in self-defeating ways has been the modal experience over the last thirty years.
>
> Fullan, M (2007)

Context & need for the study

This study, funded by Australia's ALTC for Learning & Teaching in Higher Education, has identified the capabilities that characterise effective academic leaders in a range of roles and has produced resources to develop and monitor these leadership capabilities. It has identified that the core focus for leadership in the current, highly volatile, operating context faced by our universities has to be on achieving effective change management and implementation.

The external pressures for change in higher education – radical change in many instances – are increasing not decreasing. Funding per capita from the public purse is down; competition is up; the pressure to create new sources of income has grown; institutions are more commercial; students are more numerous, diverse and forthright about getting value for the money paid; instances of litigation against universities are emerging; government scrutiny is increasing; and external quality audits are in place. Rapid developments in Communications and Information Technology (CIT) have made possible modes and approaches to learning unthought of thirty years ago.

What has unfolded in the world over the past 25 years is now calling into question whether the traditional concept of a 'university' is what is best suited to developing a nation's total social, intellectual and creative capital in the 21st century. It raises fundamental questions, therefore, about the extent to which a university must be a place where new knowledge is created and research occurs away from the mainstream; and where learning primarily is seen to involve transmission of

set content using a 'one-size-fits-all' model delivered in lecture theatres, tutorials and labs on a set timetable operated at the institution's convenience over fixed semesters.

Such questions are not new. But what is new is the increased pressure to address them; pressures built up by the combined impact of a rapidly globalising economy; increased competition for students; the entry into the world economy of new international players like China and India; the development of the European Union, including a European Higher Education area; rapid population growth and global warming; and the continued, rapid developments in CIT already noted.

To remain viable, universities must build their capacity to respond promptly, positively and wisely to this interlaced combination of 'change forces'[1]. As noted in a 2004 keynote address to the Australian Universities Quality Forum on effective change management in higher education (Scott, 2004), the motto now must be "good ideas with no ideas on how to implement them are wasted ideas". That is, universities and their leaders have to become particularly skilled at not only identifying what learning programs, research initiatives, engagement projects, structures, approaches, priorities, quality improvements and strategic developments consistent with their mission should be emphasised to keep up with the continuous movement in their operating context, but also at making sure these agreed changes are put into practice successfully and sustained.

As Vincent Tinto, professor and chair of the higher education program at Syracuse University, observed when speaking at the US National Symposium on Student Success at College & University in November 2006:

> One might argue that we already have sufficient research on student success (at university) … What is missing in our view is the ability to transform the knowledge that we have into practical knowledge.

Failed change in higher education has costs—not just economically but strategically, socially and psychologically. When enthusiastic university staff commit to a change project and that project fails they take the scars of that experience with them. Students and the country receive no benefit from failed change. Institutions that take on an essential reform project that founders suffer a loss of reputation and, in the current climate, this can lead to a loss of income and, as a consequence, closure of courses, schools or faculties with an associated risk of redundancies.

Sitting in the midst of this challenging and rapidly shifting environment are our university leaders. As one Deputy Vice-Chancellor recently observed:

> Sitting between the IT revolution, the market and community responsiveness is a particularly uncertain space for our universities right now.

Another Pro Vice-Chancellor at one of the study's national workshops noted:

> I don't think we have all really noticed how radically our focus, context, daily work and ways of thinking about higher education have changed over the past twenty years. It has just crept up on us—like the middle aged spread.

_____

1   See Fullan, M (1993): _Change forces: probing the depths of educational reform_, London, Falmer; and Fullan, M (2003): _Change forces with a vengeance_, London, Falmer Press.

There is ample evidence of how critical the presence of effective and capable leaders is to workplace productivity, morale and making essential change work in our universities. This is because change does not just happen but must be led—and deftly. Leaders of learning and teaching in universities have a central role in ensuring that their institutions not only survive but thrive in the new transnational, IT-enabled, volatile and competitive environment now faced. And with this has come a significant growth in the complexity and span of what they are expected to do.

Yet studies of how higher education leaders manage change along with their own learning and development are relatively rare compared, for example, with studies of how higher education students manage change and their learning and what sorts of environment and strategies optimise their engagement and retention. For example, Robinson et al. (2008:16) in a meta-analysis of studies of educational leadership observe:

> … the fact that there are less than 30 published studies in English that have examined the links between leadership research and student outcomes indicates how radically disconnected leadership research is from the core business of teaching and learning (see also Robinson 2006 and Rowe 2007).

The studies that do exist have repeatedly identified how unsure learning and teaching leaders are about what they might best do to lead in such a context and ensure that essential change takes hold sustainably and consistently in daily practice.

Development work over the past twenty years across Australia and with higher education systems in Scandinavia, South Africa, New Zealand, South East Asia, Oman and Canada has repeatedly revealed that what our learning and teaching leaders want are practical, higher education specific and role-specific insights into what would be the best approach in taking 'good ideas' and making them work in ways that benefit both students and the university's 'bottom line'.

We have found that the selection and development processes for higher education leaders are often unrelated to what is necessary to negotiate the daily realities of their work, that the nature and focus of leadership development programs don't always address the capabilities that count, and that the central role of university leaders in building a change capable culture is either unrecognised or misunderstood. As Debrowksi and Blake (2004: 2 & 6) have observed:

> The translation of amateur academic leaders to effective professionals relies on the infrastructure and support which is integrated into the university setting (Middlehurst, 1993) … While these are sound principles, the actual enactment of support for those engaged in teaching and learning may remain collegial and therefore ad hoc in nature for many universities (Orsmond & Stiles, 2002). We would argue that one reason for this is the inadequate delineation of what leadership entails for those supporting teaching and learning in universities … the developmental needs of academic leaders should be regarded as a fundamental issue if universities are serious about improving their educational standards … universities need to invest in academic development to enable tailored support at specific strategic levels.

At the same time there is increasing evidence that Australia is facing a significant higher education leadership succession challenge. This parallels, but is more acute than, the challenge facing the academic workforce as a whole (Coates et al. 2008). A large cohort of senior leaders – the so-called baby boomers – is about to depart. Yet many institutions report not having a coherent succession plan in place or a clear picture of what is needed to fill the gap in high-level expertise that will result from this departure. What is troubling is that this is a worldwide phenomenon. For example, at a recent (December 2007) meeting of the Vice-Presidents of Canada's universities, succession planning

for leadership was identified as one of the most pressing challenges the Canadian HE System expects to face in the coming five years.

So, while the pool of potential leadership talent is decreasing, the urgency of putting in place change capable leaders is increasing.

Although there is a welter of writing on leadership in business and industry, much of it is neither empirical nor tested for its applicability to the distinctive operating environment of a university. As already noted, our review of the literature on higher education leadership in preparation for the current study generated only a modicum of empirical research and little that covered the full gambit of leadership roles in universities. Only limited insights are available on how leaders in universities shape and are shaped by the contexts and environments in which they now work. As one of the senior academics at the national workshops that reviewed the present study's results observed:

> Leadership of learning and teaching in the higher education sector is a complex and under-explored concept. It is interpreted and practiced in multiple ways depending on the level and role within the organisation.

Focus of the study

The current study explores and identifies productive ways to address the above issues and challenges. The approach has been to build upon a decade of studying professional capability, development and change leadership in a range of contexts—most recently in a study of more than 300 effective leaders in Australian school education (Scott, 2003).

The aims of the study have been to:

■ profile academic leaders and their roles;

■ clarify what 'leadership' means in an academic context;

■ illuminate the daily realities, influences, challenges and most/least satisfying aspects of the wide range of learning and teaching roles in our universities;

■ identify the perceived markers of effective performance in each role;

■ identify the capabilities that leaders see as being most important for effective performance;

■ identify the forms of support that may be of most/least assistance in developing these capabilities;

■ determine key similarities and differences between roles; and

■ compare the study's findings with the existing literature on higher education leadership and the outcomes of parallel studies in other educational contexts.

The focus has primarily been on formal leadership roles for learning and teaching in our universities. The specific roles studied have been: Deputy Vice-Chancellor; Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching); Dean; Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching); Head of School/Department; Head of Program; and Director (Learning and Teaching).

Some of these roles focus almost exclusively on learning and teaching (e.g. the relatively recent roles of PVC [Learning and Teaching] and A/Dean [Learning and Teaching]). Other, more long standing roles like Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Dean, Head of School or Head of Department focus not only on learning and teaching but often on research, engagement and a range of budget and staff performance matters. Some leadership roles (e.g. PVC or Director of L&T) have a pan-university

scope; others (e.g. Dean or Head of School) are more focused on particular portfolio responsibilities of the institution.

A partnership

The project has been delivered through a two-year partnership between UWS, ACER and senior colleagues from some 20 Australian universities under the guidance of a National Steering Committee chaired by Professor Peter Booth, Senior DVC at The University of Technology, Sydney, and Chair of the Universities Australia DVC (A)'s group.

The partnership approach is somewhat distinctive in that not only was an online quantitative and qualitative survey undertaken with more than 500 experienced Learning and Teaching (L&T) leaders in 20 Australian universities – people from DVC to Head of Program – but also an extensive series of sector-wide workshops and a national forum were undertaken with a further 490 higher education leaders from Australian universities. Their express purpose was to test the veracity of the results and collectively identify their key implications for both individual academic leaders and their institutions. In addition, the same feedback process has been replicated in a series of workshops on the results with almost 100 leaders in South African and Canadian higher education and through benchmarking with parallel research being undertaken by the UK Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.

Methodology

The study undertook an extensive international literature review, an online survey (Appendix Two), and a series of national and international sector feedback workshops that tested the veracity of the results and identified their key implications.

As noted above, some 513 learning and teaching leaders from 20 Australian universities, occupying roles from Deputy Vice-Chancellor to Head of Program, completed the online survey; and nearly 500 leaders attended the national forum and workshops on the results, along with an additional 100 leaders at the international review workshops. The systematic use of sector-wide feedback on the results is comparatively distinctive and is an approach that is recommended for use in subsequent studies. It has ensured that the results are both valid and owned by those well positioned to action them, and that the key recommendations made in the report are authentic.

More extensive detail on the study's methodology is provided in Appendix One.

Structure of the Report

The report commences with an Executive Summary. This section of the report gives a succinct, integrated picture of what the study has uncovered. It highlights the key findings, products and insights that have emerged, and lists a series of core recommendations for acting upon these findings in ways that will both help to address the leadership succession and capability crisis faced and secure Australian Higher Education during the challenging times that lie ahead. The recommendations made have been identified not only by the 513 leaders involved in the empirical phase of the study but also validated by the additional 600 higher education leaders from Australia and across the world who have evaluated the results.

The Executive Summary is followed by a series of chapters, which justify and explain the key findings and recommendations given in the Executive Summary. In each chapter patterns of similarity and difference in the responses to the online survey by the leaders in the range of learning and teaching leadership roles studied are given. Each chapter also brings together what the available empirical literature says on the issue being addressed, what the online survey revealed, and what the participants at the national and international workshops said. Links to parallel findings from other ALTC leadership projects are also noted where appropriate.

Chapter One focuses on understanding the nature of academic leadership in our universities, the people who undertake it, and the key concepts that underpin the study. In this Chapter the often misunderstood concepts of 'leadership' and 'management' along with 'capability' and 'competence' are clarified. This is followed by an exploration of the extent to which leadership in learning and teaching differs from leadership in research, business or the public sector. A profile of academic leaders in Australia is then presented and a range of emerging implications are identified. At the same time, the literature on each of these areas is reviewed. Finally, the conceptual framework for leadership capability in higher education which has guided and been tested in the study is presented.

Chapter Two looks at the current context and key challenges faced by our academic leaders. This aspect of the study has identified how broader social, political, economic, technological and demographic changes nationally and internationally over the past quarter of a century have triggered a set of higher education specific change forces that, in turn, have interacted with a set of local institutional and cultural factors.

The key point is that the factors outlined are intertwined and feed into and off each other; and the key implication is that they make the effective management of change and implementation a key imperative for universities and their leaders if these institutions are to not only survive but thrive in a new, more volatile operating context. This chapter sets the scene for Chapter Three.

Chapter Three shifts focus onto how our higher education leaders experience and respond to the change pressures, context, influences and challenges identified in Chapter Two. First, the insider's experience of leading in such a context is identified using the analogies that the 513 leaders involved in the study developed to describe what their daily world is now like. The major areas of daily focus in each role are identified, along with their major satisfactions and challenges. Finally, the indicators our leaders use to judge that they are delivering their role effectively in such a context are discussed. This chapter identifies some important areas of misalignment between titles, roles, performance management and position descriptions on the one hand and the daily realities of each university leadership role on the other.

Chapter Four identifies the capabilities and strategies that count most in addressing the key challenges and areas of focus identified in earlier chapters for each of the higher education leadership roles studied.

The findings align with studies of successful leaders in other sectors of education and of successful graduates in nine professions. In particular, a specific set of capabilities around personal and interpersonal emotional intelligence, along with a contingent and diagnostic way of thinking emerge as being critical to effective role delivery across all of the leadership positions studied.

A key implication of this finding is that the capability profiles and methods used to identify, select and evaluate leaders may need to be significantly revised. There are also important implications for what should be given focus in academic leadership development programs.

In Chapter Five the question of how our higher education leaders prefer to learn and develop their capabilities is explored. The key findings here confirm that the same flexible, responsive, role-specific, practice-oriented and just-in-time, just-for-me learning methods that are being advocated for use to engage higher education students in productive learning and retain them apply just as well to assisting the learning and development of academic leaders. This has important implications for a radical revision of current, workshop-based approaches to leadership training in higher education. It also indicates that, if we want our learning and teaching leaders to be strong advocates for the new approaches to higher education learning now being advocated, they need to have experienced the benefits of what is intended for themselves.

Chapter Six brings together the key findings from each of the above chapters into an integrated picture. It also identifies what participants at the sector workshops said they intend to do to act on the study's findings and summarises the key recommendations that have emerged from the extensive feedback given on them. The key products generated by the study are also identified.

The Appendices provide the more technical and detailed data and analyses that underpin the conclusions drawn. Appendix Two includes a copy of the online survey.

It is anticipated that the report will be of relevance to everyone in a university who is confronted by a call or an opportunity for change and who wants their efforts to make a difference—from members of governing boards, Vice-chancellors, Provosts, Presidents and other university executives to Deans, Heads of School or Department, Program Coordinators and university administrative and service directors. It also carries important, practical policy messages for public interest groups, government departments and higher education agencies.

Executive Summary

This study has uncovered an interlocked story:

Change matters

The study has shown how the broader societal change forces that have unfolded over the past quarter century have generated a set of higher education specific pressures on universities to change, which, in turn, are testing the extent to which these institutions and their leaders are 'change capable'.

It has found that, currently, the most important 'change forces' pressing academic leaders are (in rank order) decreased government funding, growing pressure to generate new income, balancing work and family life, managing the pressures for continuous change, having to deal with slow and unresponsive administrative processes, finding and retaining high-quality staff, and increased government reporting and scrutiny.

In spite of these challenges there is clear evidence of strong commitment to the 'moral purpose' and mission of higher education held by academic leaders.

The study has identified that responding promptly and wisely to these 'change forces' by not only formulating high-quality responses but making them work consistently and effectively in practice is the central challenge faced by our universities and their leaders in the highly volatile environment they now face. It has found that doing this is critical if institutions wish to remain not only financially viable but also to continue to contribute to the total social, intellectual, cultural, and creative capital of Australia.

Change does not just happen—it must be led, and led deftly

The study has identified how our higher education leaders play a critical role in helping their institutions maintain quality and manage continuous change. It has found that what they need to know and be able to do is changing rapidly—that they need to be deft not only at management of

current operations but at successfully leading their institutions into new directions. Effective higher education leaders not only take an active role in making specific changes happen by engaging people in the process of personal and institutional change and improvement; they also help reshape the operating context of their institutions to make them less change averse, more efficient and agile, and more change capable. In this regard it is the interaction between sound, linked leadership and a directly aligned, agile, efficient and supportive operating context and culture that counts.

Change is a complex learning (and unlearning) process for all concerned

The study has highlighted that formulating and implementing desired change is not an event but a complex learning and unlearning process for all concerned. It is a learning process because, if something new has to be implemented, those who are to deliver it – for example, administrative and academic staff – have to **do** something new. To do something new requires them to **learn** a 'gap' in their expertise. Such learning for change does not just happen—it must be directly assisted and deftly led.

And it is here that the study has identified a critical role for our universities' learning and teaching leaders. The approach, attitude and interpersonal strategies found to be most effective in helping staff make a desired change work closely with those used by the most successful higher educators with their students. This insight is important because it implies that the most effective leaders not only help their staff engage with and learn how to do necessary change, but they also set up an efficient and supportive environment that fosters productive engagement in such learning. Just as the informal as well as the formal elements of interacting with others can help or hinder student learning, so too relationships and context count for staff as they seek to respond to and learn how to achieve improvements in their daily work.

It is in this way that the study has found that individual capabilities for leadership on the one hand and reshaping the context of higher education to be more change capable and less change averse on the other are interlocked. And it has shown how personal capabilities and values can both model and help build organisational capabilities and values.

Context counts: making room to lead

The study has identified that many leaders find they have 'no room to lead'. That, for example, they are so busy complying with bureaucratic and reporting procedures that do not demonstrably add value to achieving the core purposes of their roles; they are so occupied by dealing with complaints arising from faulty systems or miscommunication; so involved in responding to unexpected events or attending meetings that are poorly formulated, chaired, or which have no outcome; that they have little time left to lead or to think and operate strategically.

Similarly, such cultural factors can create conditions where line staff find they have 'no room to teach' or to learn how to make desired changes work.

However, there is ample evidence in our research that the universities that are adapting successfully to the rapidly changing operating environment and are achieving productive outcomes are addressing such issues head on—and their leaders are explicitly aware of how they are doing it.

This finding aligns well with studies of effective leadership in other contexts. As Wheeler et al. (2007) conclude in their review of research on effective approaches to strategic leadership in the most successful corporations:

> … the effectiveness of leaders depends, more than is generally realized, on the context around them. Over time, the leader's capability is shaped by the top team's quality, and by the capabilities of the full organization. These can either provide invaluable support for the changes a leader wants to make or render those changes impossible. Hence the best leaders pay a great deal of attention to the design of the elements around them.

The academic leadership succession crisis

The study has confirmed that many universities are confronted by a leadership succession crisis and are eager to identify how best to address it. This study provides a range of material and suggested strategies with which to formulate a sound response.

It does this by identifying the optimum focus for each academic leadership role – from DVC to Head of Program – and the indicators that experienced leaders in each role apply to judge that they are performing effectively. It has identified the key capabilities these experienced leaders say count most in successfully handling the challenges of leadership and change faced in each role. And it has checked that these self-report findings align with the available research from other sources and has tested their veracity in the national workshops.

Consistent with the study's underlying conceptual model and the findings from a wide range of studies in other contexts, a particular set of personal and social aspects of emotional intelligence and a contingent and diagnostic way of thinking, which are critical to successful leadership in higher education, have been identified. The study has confirmed that a high level of up-to-date knowledge about effective learning and teaching in higher education, about how universities work and their efficient organisation, is necessary but it is not sufficient for effective leadership of the area.

The capabilities that count for effective academic leadership

The study has validated empirically the capabilities that count by showing statistically the key ones identified in earlier studies retained their importance across all of the leadership roles studied. It has then identified their relative importance by role and has produced a statistically determined and validated set of subscales for higher education leadership. It has revealed the critical role of emotional intelligence – both personal and interpersonal – and a contingent and diagnostic way of thinking in effective leadership for learning and teaching across all of the roles studied.

Specifically, the study has demonstrated that effective leaders of learning and teaching in Australian higher education not only possess up-to-date knowledge and skills on the area, they are also self-aware, decisive, committed, able to empathise with and influence a wide diversity of people, are cognitively flexible, and are particularly deft at diagnosis and strategy formation. It has also shown that, although this pattern runs across all of the roles studied, the more senior a leader becomes the more developed and integrated these capabilities have to be.

It has shown that these capabilities are most tested when things go wrong, when the unexpected happens and when what is planned is not working out in the ways anticipated. Equally, however, it has found that, in the relatively unique context and culture of a university, one's capability as a leader

can be just as tested when confronted with complacency, cynicism, stonewalling, 'white-anting', needless bureaucracy or disengagement.

The focus of academic leadership

The study has identified a number of areas of focus in academic leadership that cut across the majority of leadership positions studied. These include: policy formation, managing relationships, working with challenging staff, involvement in various aspects of planning, and attending meetings.

It has also identified areas of specific emphasis in particular roles that serve to complement the focus of other roles. For example, people in roles like Head of Program report giving far more focus to working directly with students, program development and implementation than other leadership roles; Deans and Heads of School report giving particular focus to budget management, staff management, external relations and identifying new opportunities; DVCs & PVCs emphasise strategy formation and developing organisational processes; Associate Deans report a focus on reviewing teaching activities; and Directors of L&T see networking as an important component of their role.

The study has also revealed that, while common titles for positions are used, some of these (e.g. 'Pro Vice-Chancellor' or 'Associate Dean') have widely varying meanings and accountabilities across the sector. This has implications for the mobility and recognition of our learning and teaching leaders. The study has also found a clear distinction between those roles (e.g. DVC, Dean and Head of School) that control resources and others that typically do not (e.g. PVC and Associate Dean). In the latter case people in these roles report having to develop the skills of 'leading through influence' and leveraging collegiality to engage staff in necessary change.

Judging effectiveness as an academic leader

The top five ranking indicators that the 513 leaders report using to judge the effectiveness of their own performance are: achieving high-quality graduate outcomes, successful implementation of new initiatives, producing significant improvements in learning and teaching quality, establishing a collegial working environment, and delivering agreed tasks on time and to specification. The focus in these indicators is primarily, therefore, on measures associated with outcomes, implementation and impact more than on inputs (like plans produced, restructures completed, resources allocated, or reviews held). They integrate the effectiveness indicators associated with both transformational and instructional leadership identified in other settings (see, for example, Robinson et al. 2008).

Across all roles, being able to implement initiatives successfully and sustainably is seen to be a critical factor for effective leadership. This, for our respondents, includes being able to bring innovative policies and practices into action on time and to specification, and leading successful team-based projects that demonstrably improve student outcomes. The quantitative and qualitative data from the study and the sector workshops showed consistently that delivering on this critical requirement requires leaders who are 'change savvy' and who adopt many of the same perspectives and strategies as the highest ranking teachers in universities.

Effective approaches to the development of academic leaders

The study has identified what needs to be done to make the support given to university leaders more engaging and productive as they seek to learn their role and develop their leadership capabilities.

It has found that exactly the same flexible, responsive, active, problem-based, just-in-time, just-for-me learning methods found to engage university students in productive learning, in studies like those using *CEQuery* (Scott 2006)[2], is what leaders report they want. The challenge of how to manage and support the provision of such programs remains.

The leaders in this study expressed an overwhelming preference for role-specific, practice-based, peer-supported and self-managed learning, rather than the more usual one-off, formal and generic workshop-based types of professional learning. Informal mentoring was identified by both male and female leaders across all of the roles studied as an effective method of learning leadership, especially if guided by a role-focused diagnostic framework like that validated in the current study—a framework which enables leaders to make sense of their work and to identify areas of good practice and those requiring improvement. It is particularly valued prior to and early in an appointment, and especially by Heads of School and Program.

The role of Head of School (or Dean in a smaller university) has emerged as being a particularly tricky one—as people in such positions find themselves being held directly responsible for budget outcomes, staff performance, meeting student load targets and productivity whilst having, at the same time, to manage both up and down. The most common analogy used by the 150 Heads of School involved in the current study was that it felt like being "the meat in the sandwich".

The role least recognised for its critical role as the final arbiter of whether a desired change is actually taken up and actioned locally is that of Head of Program. If these people do not engage then they will not focus and assist their staff to learn how to make the desired change work in practice. The development of Heads of Programs Networks led by a PVC (Learning and Teaching) and their early involvement in the learning and teaching change process to test the relevance, feasibility and clarity of what is being proposed was widely recommended in the study's review workshops.

It has become very clear, in analysing the extensive quantitative and qualitative data generated by the study, that current approaches to leadership development in higher education need to be radically reconceptualised. If this is done there will be multiple benefits—learning leaders will have experienced approaches known to engage their students first hand, and they will be assisted to fill gaps in their own expertise using the role-specific leadership capability framework and practical knowledge validated by the study.

The study has produced a wide range of role-specific analyses to ensure that leadership development programs are as relevant as possible. It has identified the key aspects of each leadership role that incumbents say are critical, it has identified the capabilities that need to be developed to deliver them, and it has generated an extensive set of role-specific case studies that identify the key problems and challenges leaders in particular leadership positions can expect to encounter, along with the practical strategies these leaders have found work best to resolve them. This role-specific material on key leadership 'hot spots' and the practical suggestions on how they might best be addressed is precisely what our leaders have said is missing in many of the leadership programs they currently experience.

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2   This study analysed more than 280,000 'best aspect' and 'needs improvement' comments written on the national course experience questionnaire.

Specifically, the study has identified and tested at its review workshops how one might best approach the common challenges of academic leadership. It has affirmed a set of approaches that show what the findings on the capabilities that count for effective performance look like in daily practice.

These include adopting tactics like the following:

- Listen, link and lead—in that order. Listen first to what others have to say is the most relevant and feasible way to address a learning and teaching issue that requires attention but always with a 'menu' of proven options; then link what has been said into a practical, owned, achievable way of acting on the chosen option; finally lead the implementation of the change in ways consistent with the findings of the study.

- Listen in particular to 'resistors'. They can identify many of the 'trip-wires' that must be overcome. Listening to 'resistors' is also a positive way to handle disengagement.

- Before holding a public meeting on any contentious issue, canvass the full range of perspectives on it in advance.

- Be accessible to staff but within explicit and agreed parameters.

- Remain calm when things go wrong, avoid engaging in blame by focusing on the problem not the individual.

- Confirm any agreed area for action with the people concerned by email, after discussing what is to be done personally with them.

- Set up agreed and clear expectations of what needs to be done, by whom, with what support and against what tests at the outset; then refer back to this as implementation proceeds—in the same way that we manage expectations about assessment and learning with our students.

- Recognise that all change is a learning process and that what motivates students to engage with change (learning) is exactly what will motivate staff.

- Keep in mind that context and culture count; that change, like learning, is a profoundly social experience, and that one's peer group is an important source of motivation (or de-motivation) and support.

- Be particularly careful in calling meetings and when one is called make sure it is carefully chaired with a sharply formulated agenda and an evidence-based, action focus; give particular attention to following up at the outset of each subsequent meeting precisely what was achieved in practical terms with the agreed actions from the previous one.

- Always model the values and approaches you want others to adopt in your own behaviour – 'practice what you preach'.

- Tell staff what really counts, what the key focus for change is in their area, why it is necessary, and what the important role that they are to play in actioning it is.

Finally, one of the key things to emerge from the national and international workshops on the study's findings is how supportive it is to realise that what one thought were unique dilemmas and challenges are, in fact, shared by so many others in the same role. Leaders at these workshops repeatedly reported how validated and encouraged they felt upon hearing that they were 'not alone' and how helpful it was to have a framework and some national empirical data within which to locate and make sense of their individual experiences.

Recommendations

On the basis of feedback from the national and international workshops on the findings of this study and from the project's national steering committee it is recommended that:

1. Universities build the key findings concerning the priority areas of focus in each learning and teaching leadership role, along with the performance indicators and the capabilities identified as counting most for effective performance, into a revised and complementary set of leadership position descriptions, succession plans, selection procedures, development processes and performance management systems for each of the roles studied.

2. Cost-effective ways of assessing academic leadership potential and the capabilities that count, which go beyond standard interview selection procedures and the use of referees' reports, be explored in more detail. This would include investigating the use of a proposed online, role-specific Leadership Evaluation & Development Resource (LEADR) based on the findings of the current study.

3. The items in currently used, generic 360-degree performance systems for academic leaders be checked for validity and relative importance against the study's findings and that this process be differentiated by role.

4. Institutions and government continue to highlight the importance of learning and teaching in order to attract a new generation of leaders to this critical role as the current, older generation of leaders leaves the system; and that the moral and financial importance of effective leadership of learning and teaching in universities to the individuals, surrounding communities and the country be emphasised.

5. Leadership development and learning programs be reviewed and aligned with the findings of the study concerning how and what academic leaders prefer to learn, and that the fact that this is identical to the way in which higher education students wish to learn be made explicit. Where possible, programs should be underpinned by evidence-based insights into effective professional practice in the specific leadership roles involved. In doing this it is recommended that universities investigate ways of setting up learning networks for people in the same role, in particular Heads of School, A/Deans and Heads of Program.

6. The key lessons from research on effective change implementation in higher education be part of every orientation and development program for learning and teaching leadership.

7. Further research be undertaken on:
    a. The profile of Australia's academic leaders;
    b. The nature and impact of informal leadership in Learning and Teaching;
    c. The similarities and differences between the roles of learning and teaching leaders and those in other roles—for example, leaders of research, university engagement and administrative services;
    d. Leadership teams that have specifically achieved significant improvements in student outcomes, along the lines already used in studies of school effectiveness.

8. Universities Australia develop comprehensive, publicly available databases of senior leaders, with appropriate defining information (i.e. variations by role).

Products

The study has produced:

1. A validated capability framework for effective leadership in higher education. This includes an empirically and statistically determined set of higher education leadership capability domains and subscales.

2. A functional prototype of an online tool to enable future leaders in each role to complete the same survey as the 513 participants in the current study and compare their responses with these 'fellow travellers'.

3. A set of role-specific case studies and proven methods for handling the key challenges identified for each role.

4. A mechanism to revise not only leadership selection but its development in universities.

5. A set of quality checkpoints for ensuring academic leadership learning programs are productive and engaging.

6. A set of checkpoints for shaping and developing a change capable university culture, which bring together the study's key findings on this issue (Appendix Three).

7. A set of slides summarising the study's results, which have been field-tested nationally and internationally for clarity and relevance.

8. A tested methodology for efficiently gaining extensive sector feedback on and engagement with the outcomes of such studies.

It is important to re-emphasise that the findings, implications and recommendations outlined above were not developed by the study team alone but in a focused partnership with around 1000 higher education leaders from around the world. Many of those who have participated in the study's workshops on the findings are already actioning the recommendations that have emerged. Others are feeding in further refinements of the insights and strategies generated.

It is in this way that action on the results has already commenced and is being continuously tested and refined. It is very important that follow-up monitoring is undertaken to ensure that the knowledge and resources produced in this study are being consistently and effectively used to support a change in leadership practice.

What now follows gives more specific detail on how the above insights were developed, what has been found, what justifies the recommendations made and the key suggestions on how they might best be implemented.

01

Understanding Academic Leadership

This chapter focuses on understanding the nature of academic leadership in our universities, the people who undertake it and the key concepts that underpin the study.

The concepts of 'leadership' and 'management', along with 'capability' and 'competence', are clarified. This is followed by an exploration of the extent to which leadership in learning and teaching differs from leadership in research, business or the public sector. A profile of academic leaders in Australia is then presented and a range of emerging implications are identified. At the same time the literature on each of these areas is reviewed. Finally, the conceptual framework for leadership capability in higher education, which has guided and been tested in the study, is presented.

Leadership compared with management

Leadership

> When I refer to leadership … I imply … a practical and everyday process of supporting, managing, developing and inspiring academic colleagues … leadership in universities can and should be exercised by everyone, from the vice chancellor to the casual parking attendant.
>
> Ramsden (1998: 4)

Although the words 'leadership' and 'leading' are widely used, when people are asked to define them a wide variety of different conceptions emerge. For example, in their study, Bennis and Nanus (1985) identified over 350 different definitions of the concept.

The 500 leaders who participated in the national and international workshops on the outcomes of the present study were invited to identify how 'leadership' and 'management' might best be defined and distinguished in the unique context of a university.

First, the following uses of the concept of 'leadership' were identified:

■ To describe the *process* of engaging people in change, leading them forwards, achieving voluntary followership, helping identify what most needs to be done and then helping make it happen;

■ To denote a particular set of *qualities* or *capabilities*. For example, being someone who is both aspirational and inspirational, a person who can motivate and enable others to act in ways that fulfil their potential and the aims of the university, someone who is future not just present oriented, who is a pathfinder, who can take a hard decision, can set a framework to make sense of what is happening or who is at the forefront;

■ As a collective noun to describe a particular *group of people* 'in charge' of a university or unit and who, ideally, work in a complementary and mutually reinforcing way to make things happen.

As Rost (1993) concludes:

> Today, scholars discuss the basic nature of leadership in terms of 'interaction' among the people in the process: both leaders and followers. Thus, leadership is not the work of a single person, rather it can be explained and defined as a 'collaborative endeavour' among group members.
>
> Rost (1993a); cited Brungardt (1998)

In the literature on higher education leadership the term is often accompanied by some sort of descriptor like 'transformational', 'distributed', 'shared', 'situational' and so on.

Management

> The development of any normative model requires the consideration of both leadership and management as staff appear to perceive a difference.
>
> Middlehurst (1993); cited Thompson & Harrison (2000)

The participants at the study's review workshops drew the following distinctions between leadership and management in the context of higher education.

Management	Leadership
More operational – a focus on day to day matters – HR, budget, facilities	More strategic
More focus on the present	More focus on the future
Ensuring the unit functions efficiently and effectively	Setting the vision for where the unit will head
Managers do things right	Leaders do the right thing
Usually a formal position	Can be formal or informal
Managers ask how	Leaders ask why
Skill (competency) based	Diagnostic (capability) based

Management in higher education was generally seen as being a subset of leadership—as involving the application of a set of practical skills and knowledge to make sure one's higher education 'ship'

keeps operating efficiently. As one senior leader observed, "A good leader needs to be a good manager but not necessarily vice versa". Leadership, on the other hand, was generally seen as being more to do with figuring out where the ship (or fleet in the case of more senior leadership roles) might best head and then making sure it gets there, irrespective of the conditions encountered.

Other relevant terms

The current study uses the terms 'position', 'role', 'function' and 'activity' in the same way as Jones & Holdaway, (1996):

- a position is a designation familiar to those in a given context;
- a role is a pattern of behaviours characteristic of a given context;
- a function is a category of behaviours within a role;
- an activity is a specific behaviour which can be visible in different roles (e.g. planning, staff evaluation).

The literature on leadership and management in higher education

The available literature on leadership and management in higher education generally aligns with the above analysis. A reluctance to define key terms is noted (Rost, 1993).

The general consensus in the literature is that what leaders need to know and be able to do requires both 'management' and 'leadership' (Middlehurst & Elton, 1992; Ramsden, 1998; Wolverton et al. 2005). 'Management' is generally seen as being more about routine tasks in the context of existing practice and sustaining what is currently working well. 'Leadership' is seen as having more focus on setting and motivating new directions—so leadership (the new) and management (the current) go hand in hand. As Osse-Assare et al. (2005) note when observing that leaders do the right things whereas managers do things right: "The first part relates to leadership 'effectiveness' and the second part to management 'efficiency', suggesting that there is a functional relationship between effectiveness and efficiency".

This generally aligns with Ramsden's (1998: 108) distinction between management and leadership:

> Management is a way of imposing regulation on the incipient chaos of a large institution … it is a way of keeping the organisation on time and on budget. Managers plan, organise, staff and solve problems in current operations. Management is about 'doing things right', about looking at present activities and ensuring they work consistently and well … Leadership is about change, about looking forward and outward, about ensuring the enterprise stays in alignment with a constantly changing environment. It is about establishing direction, about 'doing the right thing'; it enables people to adapt to, work with change rather than resist it.
>
> A central idea in Kotter's work is that the two systems – management and leadership – are complementary and equally necessary to a work unit or organisation's success. Excessive management produces compliance, passivity, and order for order's sake; it discourages risk-taking and stifles creativity and long term vision. But excessive leadership without the compensating force of strong management produces inconsistent, delayed and off budget results, while emphasising change for change's sake.

However, as Law and Glover (2000: 320) observe, at the operational level the differences remain unclear:

> Leadership, management and administration require different, but overlapping skills, knowledge and abilities. However, on an operative level they are poorly differentiated. Role confusion and overlap between these roles and also that of administrators, may give rise to conflict of interest, inequities in workload and inappropriately applied expertise. Inevitably, this contributes to inefficiencies, diminished job satisfaction and reduced quality of overall 'management'.

Part of the ambiguity and confusion according to Yielder and Codling (2004) is to do with ill-defined boundaries of performance. The authors suggest that academic leadership can be based on 'authority' being placed in the individual's personal characteristics and expertise, and in an ability to win followers in the collegial culture of the academy. While 'management' is based on 'authority' being placed in the position and the individual may or may not have the capabilities to exercise this leadership. The point Yielder and Codling (2004) make is that position does not equate with leadership—although few would argue that a position of authority does not carry with it an explicit expectation of leadership.

Generally, a distinctive feature of 'leading' in the educational research literature is, therefore, an individual's or group's capacity to influence "the goal-directed behaviour of others" (Bryman, 2007). House (2004: 15) sees it as being "the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members". Many authors add that the focus is on change, with many identifying the important role for the 'transformational leader' in the current rapidly shifting operating context of universities (Bass, 1995, 1998; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). The danger of this view is that it may suggest a disconnection of the leader from the context in which leadership is enacted. The situated nature of leadership in higher education is explored in some detail in Chapter Two.

An interesting question is the extent to which leadership of learning and teaching differs from and is similar to other forms of academic leadership—from non-academic leadership and, indeed, from leadership outside the academy. For example, although enacting leadership must, as this report shows, take into account the particular local operating context and circumstances, to what extent are key leadership capabilities that underpin performance transferable across roles or contexts? This clearly has implications for the movement of leaders between roles within institutions, and between universities and other organisations. For example, given the looming shortage of leaders, it is critical to have insight into the extent to which people can transition into learning and teaching leadership roles from relatively unrelated professional areas.

Is leadership of learning and teaching at a university any different from leadership in other contexts?

> (The senior lecturers and professors in the focus groups) … instanced the lack of hierarchical structures in universities compared with the corporate sector, with the result that academics are reluctant to be subject to authority. This is compounded by the fact that some academic disciplines require academics to act as individuals, leading their own fields in new directions. Balancing this are traditional notions of collegiality which, presuming a collaborative style of working, do not support the idea of being led or requiring academic leadership.
>
> Marshall et al. (2001: 7)

> Academic leadership poses problems that are distinctly different from leadership in business or government agencies … Private organisations are guided solely by considerations of maximising shareholder value … Academic leaders need to stay close to teaching, learning, research and scholarship to bring out the best among academics. Issues of academic freedom are of great importance and relevance in this context.
>
> Sathye (2004: 5)

Existing research sheds comparatively little systematic light on the distinctions between academic leadership and leadership in other contexts, beyond the general points made in the quotes above. An assumption can be made that disciplinary, pedagogical and institutional or sectoral expertise would be required, but even this is relatively unexamined. It is possible that such knowledge may not be required, or that it may be insufficient.

For this reason the issue was explored in some detail at the study's national and international workshops.

First comparisons were made with other university roles and then with leadership in non-educational contexts.

Participants noted that leaders of research have a much more precise role compared with learning and teaching leaders. The following comments made at the workshops are indicative:

> In research you can generally choose who you work with and most existing researchers are enthusiastic about their area … Research tends to be focused on one's own goals and interests; learning and teaching is more focused on corporate goals; research is undertaken in the interests of discovery; learning and teaching is undertaken in the interests of students and the institution.
>
> Research leadership is not as complex as learning and teaching leadership—you don't need to have so many different sorts of people onside to make it work.
>
> Research and teaching require different skills. How you become a research leader is quite different from how you become a learning and teaching leader.
>
> The outcomes of the research effort are more bounded, agreed and defined—measurement of research outcomes is clearer.
>
> Research is focused on creating new knowledge and investigation, typically around an issue one is intrinsically interested in and with those who share this interest. Learning and teaching requires leaders who must work with all sorts of people on not only content but process. To do this they have to have a more developed set of interpersonal capabilities and the ability to form and get the best out of a diverse team, many of whom one has not chosen to work with.

It was also emphasised that some roles investigated in the present study – for example, DVC (Academic), Dean or Head of School – cover not only learning and teaching but research, engagement and a range of management functions, whereas others – for example, PVC (Learning and Teaching), A/Dean (L&T) or Director (L&T) – are far more focused.

As a participant at one of the national workshops noted:

> A Head of School has to simultaneously manage resources, budgets, staff and be accountable for load, and ensure the quality of learning and teaching, research and engagement. On the other hand A/Deans (L&T) have a much more bounded role with more limited control over or accountability for resources.

In comparing learning and teaching leadership with leadership in non-educational contexts the following points were made at the national workshops:

- In higher education the cultural value of 'collegiality' means that 'winning followership' is especially important—this, said participants, is a less compelling factor in many other public and private organisations. As participants at one national workshop observed:

> In universities, as a result of the academic value of collegiality, you have to operate more from moral authority than in business where positional authority has weight. So a lot of fine leadership is about winning followers, leading through influence. This is less the case in industry where the outcomes are also much easier to define.

- Higher education must operate under the timetable and political pressures associated with being funded (at least in part) by government and having to report annually against the provisions of the university's act of parliament. This is not something that leaders working in a private company have to confront, although it may be something shared with those who run various government departments and instrumentalities.
- The outcomes of higher education, especially outcomes in the learning and teaching area – like the development of informed citizens, creative professionals, people who can work with diversity – are much harder to measure than indicators associated with 'bottom line' measures like 'profitability'.

As one senior leader at the national workshops concluded:

> In my view university leadership is very different from leadership in private enterprise—the 'collegial' culture of universities means that much of the leadership there must be leadership through influence, not through mandate or through power. Tenure and the academic cultures of consensus and academic freedom also play a distinctive role.

More provocatively Warren Bennis (2006), in discussing US higher education and the demise of the President of Harvard, made the following observations about the distinctive operating context of the university:

> … there is no institution more vulnerable to, and hence more dependent on, external forces than the American university. One major reason is that such schools are not self-supporting … The lulling image of the university as a bucolic outpost of learning both removed and somewhat 'above' the outside society that nourishes it is not only outdated but, if believed and acted on, will actually bring about the university's decline or destruction. Even worse, university leaders possess far less power than any CEO I know. While campuses aren't exactly parliamentary democracies, they do have often strident faculties – with tenure – who have a redoubtable habit of speaking up and out. They are often extraordinarily talented, self-absorbed 'abdicrats' who don't want to lead – and don't want to be led.

In a UK Leadership Foundation for Higher Education study of the changing role of the PVC, Smith et al. (2007: 5) conclude:

> … Universities are not like business organisations. Despite the transformations associated with mass higher education, the main historical empires and activities of the university survive largely intact. Teaching schemes, research groups and administration (in some form) mark the main fault lines in universities … there are enduring and often highly distinct professional practices, procedures and cultures that define the organisation.

A profile of academic leaders in Australian higher education

A lack of empirical information about our academic leadership in Australia became apparent during the initial scoping for the study and during the literature search and review (see, for example, Bryan, 2007). This has been further confirmed in a recent national study that sought to identify the changing characteristics of the Australian academic profession (Coates et al. 2008). Little robust data could be located on the basic characteristics, profile or background of Australia's higher education leadership. This was confirmed as we sought to establish the sample for the study and during the national workshops that reviewed the findings.

The names and positions of senior university officers are listed on the Universities Australia website (AVCC, 2006); however, more detailed information is hard to find. Selected information is available on institutional websites and in annual reports, but this information is difficult to aggregate and is neither comprehensive nor easily compared across institutions.

A recent study by *Campus Review* (2006) does provide some relevant information and this is referred to as the results from the current study are presented below. The *Campus Review* study involved 124 senior leaders from 35 Australian universities. They included 39 Deans, 39 Pro Vice-Chancellors, 26 Deputy Vice-Chancellors, 9 Executive Deans and 5 in 'other' categories.

Another source of information is the annual staff statistics compiled by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (now the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations). These statistics provide broad-brush information on a range of demographic and context variables. They identify Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Professors, although they do not provide information on whether Professors hold formal leadership positions within their institution. Further, it is not possible to determine whether the leadership positions identified are related specifically to learning and teaching or to other areas such as administration, facilities or research. Nonetheless, the statistics do provide some insight into who our higher education leaders are.

For example, of the 39 Vice-Chancellors in Australia, the 2004 DEST statistics (DEST, 2005) indicate that 30 (76.9 per cent) were male, and 93 (70.5 per cent) of the 132 Deputy Vice-Chancellors were male. The statistics include 4146 Professors, and 3042 of these (73.4 per cent) were male. The number of female leaders has risen in the last two decades, but falls short of a critical mass at the senior levels (Bell & Bentley, 2005; White, 2003, 2004).

There is a rough correlation between age and seniority. Most Vice-Chancellors are between 60 and 64 years of age whereas most Deputy Vice-Chancellors are between 55 and 59 years old, the same age bracket occupied by most Professors. There are almost as many Professors in the 45 to 49 year old bracket, while only around 10 per cent of all Vice-Chancellors and Deputy Vice-Chancellors fell

into this category. These figures suggest that, assuming a retirement age of 65, most of today's Vice-Chancellors and Deputy Vice-Chancellors will be retiring within the decade.

Interestingly only 87.9 per cent of Deputy Vice-Chancellors were employed full time at their institution, slightly less than the 88.4 per cent of Professors. Most of these senior academics held doctorates, although around nine per cent had a masters as their highest qualification and four per cent a bachelors degree. Just over 60 per cent obtained their qualification in Australia. More than 90 per cent of these senior academics had English as a home language. In total, 82.6 per cent of Vice-Chancellors, 61.3 per cent of Deputy Vice-Chancellors and 58.7 per cent of Professors were born in Australia.

In the *Campus Review* (2006) survey, 74.2% of 124 senior academic respondents (DVCs, PVCs, Deans and Executive Deans) were male and 25.8% were female, and 69% of the Campus Review respondents believed that there were not enough women in senior positions in their universities.

An analysis by Harman (2002) of the backgrounds of Deans and Heads of Department provides a further source of information on these two specific groups of academic leaders. Harman's analysis is interesting as it provides a comparison between 1977 and 1997 figures. In terms of social and educational backgrounds, Harman notes a general ageing and marked increased in female Heads and Deans over the 20 year period studied. Over this period, both Deans and Heads tended to have between 15 and 18 years of academic experience, and between 9 and 13 years tenure in their institution. Harman also notes the increasing trend over the 20 years to recruit academics born and trained in Australia rather than abroad, but that the socioeconomic background of Deans and Heads has remained relatively stable across the period under study. In terms of educational levels, Deans and Heads in both 1977 and 1997 tend to have superior academic backgrounds, although Harman notes that the gap in research achievements between them and other academics had narrowed over the 20 year period studied. As the DEST staff statistics suggest, most academic leaders tend to hold doctorates, although the 2004 figure of 81 per cent is an increase from Harman's 1997 figure of 75 per cent.

Together, these figures provide broad information about the backgrounds of some, but by no means all, of Australia's higher education leaders. While based on limited data, they offer a picture of the general characteristics of these individuals. Most are males and in their mid-50s with doctorates from Australian universities. Most were born in Australia and have English as their home language. They tend to have been working in higher education for around 20 years, which, given their age, suggests that they have spent most of their work-lives at universities. As expected, these people tend to have superior academic backgrounds and track records.

The present study gives a more detailed insight into the profile of Australia's academic leaders—not just the most senior learning and teaching leaders but more local ones like Heads of School and Heads of Program. As noted earlier, a total of 513 leaders from 20 of Australia's 38 public universities responded to the study's survey with a total response rate of 41.3 per cent. The response rates for individual institutions ranged from 24.7 per cent to 66.7 per cent. At least a third of surveyed leaders responded at 17 of the 20 institutions. These response rates offer some assurance as to the representativeness and hence generalisability of the data.

Respondents provided information on a range of demographic characteristics that prior research suggested as being relevant to leadership—gender, academic background, type of institution at which the leader works, role, previous leadership experience, period of time in the current role, and experience outside higher education.

Just over half of the respondents (53.6%) were male and most were between 46 and 55 years of age (45.4%) or 56 to 65 years of age (30.0%). It should be noted that this is because the present study covers far more roles – including those of Head of School and Head of Program – than the DEST or *Campus Review* studies.

The largest proportion of respondents in the present study had a humanities background (20.9%), followed by those with an education (19.9%) or health background (17.7%). Just over a third of respondents worked at 'sandstone' institutions (33.5%), over a fifth (22.0%) at regional institutions, with the remaining at 'technology', 'innovative' and non-aligned institutions.

The survey sought information about leaders' roles. Most responses came from people working as Heads of School or Department (26.2%), with the next largest proportion from Program Heads or Co-ordinators (20.2%). Around a fifth of the sample were working as a Dean or an Associate or Assistant Dean, while 3.6 per cent were in senior executive PVC or DVC roles. Directors supplied 9.2 per cent of all responses. Altogether, 16.2 per cent of respondents self-identified as having an 'other' role. While the focus of our inquiry is deliberately restricted to formal academic leadership roles, it is clear that the 'other' roles could be classified as various forms of 'informal leadership' (9.8%), as roles associated with 'academic development and support' (5.5%), and a small number of other roles that could not be easily classified.

To build a picture of the leaders' employment trajectories, information was sought on respondents' leadership experiences prior to taking up their current roles and on their aspirations and intentions. Before their current position, respondents had most commonly (32.0%) held a general academic, Head of Program (25.5%) or Head of School/Department (18.1%) appointment. Most had been in their current role for between two and five years (50.9%) or six to ten years (20.3%). In total, 17.3 per cent, just less then a fifth, had held their role for more than 10 years. Interestingly, around half had held a leadership position outside higher education. While most reported an intention to apply for another more senior leadership role, these intentions were not strictly linear. In the *Campus Review* (2006) survey more than 40% of respondents had been with their current institution for 10 or more years and 59% of the Campus Review respondents considered there were many opportunities for academics to develop career paths.

In the *Campus Review* (2006) survey females (56%) considered themselves less prepared than males (75%) when they took up their first leadership position.

Having a sharper picture of the backgrounds, abilities, needs and experience of our current and aspiring academic leaders is critical to ensuring that leadership development programs are relevant and engaging; it also gives some confirmation of the looming succession crisis, along with progress in equity areas like gender balance.

The concepts of competence and capability

Like 'Leadership' and 'management', concepts like 'competence' and 'capability' remain poorly understood, with comparatively little shared meaning evident across the sector. Yet making sure that we are all talking about the same thing when such terms are used is fundamental to developing a coherent strategy for succession planning and higher education leadership selection, development, performance management and support.

Competence

At the current study's national and international workshops, 'competencies' were seen as being associated more with managing than leading. Specifically, competencies were seen as identifying what has to be known or performed, in what context and to what standard.

This generally aligns with the literature reviewed where the concept of being 'competent' typically refers to someone who possesses the key skills and knowledge required to deliver the tasks that make up a specific job or are necessary to run a particular operation effectively. The following definitions are typical:

> Competencies are, in essence, definitions of expected performance that, taken as a whole, should provide users with the complete picture of the most valuable behaviours, values and tasks required for their organisation's success.
>
> Rankin (2004)
>
> Competency means possessing the requisite capacities and knowledge base to undertake one's agreed upon functions.
>
> Dauphin (2005:1)

Rankin (2004) also notes differences of approach in the formulation of competency profiles between countries:

> '(UK) Occupational standards' (formerly known as 'standards of competence') are primarily lists of technical, job-specific competencies. They concentrate on the 'what' of a job and, if they address the 'how' of a job, usually do so indirectly … Unlike the US approach, where competencies are often defined from the bottom up (by individual employers or by particular firms of consultants), the UK's occupational standards were intended to be cascaded from the top – the national level, led by government – down to individual employers … these standards define minimum, acceptable performance levels (instead of differentiating superlative levels). In addition, they produce their definitions by studying jobs, while the US approach studies people.

Competencies can be organisational, job-specific or personal (Byham, 1996). They involve the possession of the particular knowledge, traits, motives, and skills essential to performing a specific job to a specified standard in a particular setting (Boyatzis, 1982; Whiddert & Hollyford, 2003; Marshall, P. 1996). In its more general use, 'being competent' is associated with being (legally) qualified to perform an act.

It is also generally agreed that competencies must be 'demonstrable' (Weightman, 1994). In much of the writing on the area, competencies tend to be clustered into lists of key tasks to be performed and things to be known. This approach is seen, for example, in Tucker's (1992) 11 categories of essential knowledge, skills and attributes for Department Chairs in US higher education:

- budgeting and resource allocation;
- curriculum and programs;
- department administration;
- external communication;
- faculty affairs;

- internal communication;
- legal;
- office management;
- professional development;
- staffing; and
- student affairs.

Aziz et al. 2005, when discussing the training needs of university Department Chairs, observe that such lists are a good start but are limited in their utility. Others (e.g. Ingvarson et al. 2006) observe that such approaches essentially constitute a job description and give little indication of how people actually understand or do the job.

Importantly, a sole focus on 'competency' as the ability to perform set tasks to a specified standard, fails to take into account the changing and uncertain nature of daily leadership practice or to emphasise the significance of an individual's capacity to know when and when not to draw upon specific areas of skill or knowledge. As Duignan (2004) concluded in his study, the requisite is having the 'dynamic capacity to respond to changing circumstances and to try to improve those circumstances' (pg 7). And this requires something more than competence; it requires what, in this study, we define as 'capability'.

Capability

In comparison with 'competence', participants in the study's national and international workshops saw 'capability' as involving that level of talent, gift or capacity required to produce productive outcomes and deliver innovations under testing, uncertain and constantly shifting human and technical situations.

In this sense, said the participants, 'capability' is more associated with higher education leadership than management, with having the talent and capacity necessary to operate successfully with others to achieve continuous improvement and innovation. It entails, said the workshop participants, the possession of attributes like being able to work productively, calmly, persuasively and deftly with diversity and uncertainty; a willingness to take responsibility and a hard decision; a capacity to inspire others to action through sound decision-making, integrity and enthusiasm; an ability to diagnose and figure out what is really going on in a complex situation; a capacity to 'see the big picture', to identify and set down what ultimately proves some years down the track to be a successful new direction, and then the ability to engage and support people in making it happen in a way that is both tactical and responsive. It entails, as one participant emphasised, the ability to 'read and respond to a continuously and rapidly changing external environment'.

In this perspective 'capability' sets the limits for both the development of 'competencies' and their appropriate deployment, and it entails having the emotional and cognitive capacity to figure out when and when not to draw upon specific competencies, along with the capacity to learn from experience.

This view has links to Ramsden's (1998) observation that what combines aspects of leading and managing in higher education is leaders' capacity to manage not only their own learning and change but that of others:

> … (This) is closely associated with the idea of helping people through change and providing a vision for the future … It reflects an established notion in the mainstream literature on management and leadership—that effective leaders act as educators who help others learn … By these means credible leaders turn followers into leaders.
>
> Ramsden (1998: 110).

It also aligns with the predominantly US focus on identifying the distinguishing characteristics of effective leaders in particular higher education roles (see: Blake, Mouton and Williams, 1981; Boyatzis, 1982; Montez, 2003; Blackmore and Sachs, 2007; and in school education, Duignan, 2004 and Scott, 2003), rather than the development of lists of tasks to be performed or behaviours to be demonstrated, which has more in common with the definitions of competency reviewed earlier.

In this perspective 'competence' (being able to budget, knowing what approaches to learning and teaching work well, understanding how the university runs, being able to chair a meeting effectively, etc) is necessary but it is not sufficient for effective leadership in higher education. Whereas being competent is about delivery of specific tasks in relatively predictable circumstances, capability is more about responsiveness, creativity, contingent thinking and growth in relatively uncertain ones. What distinguishes the most effective leaders, as we shall see in Chapter Four, is their capability—in particular their emotional intelligence (both personal and interpersonal) and a distinctive, contingent capacity to work with and figure out what is going on in troubling situations, to determine which of the hundreds of problems and unexpected situations they encounter each week are worth attending to and which are not, and then the ability to identify and trace out the consequences of potentially relevant ways of responding to the ones they decide need to be addressed.

While competencies are often fragmented into discrete parcels or lists, capability is a much more holistic, integrating, creative, multidimensional and fluid phenomenon. Whereas most conceptions of competence concentrate on assessing demonstrated behaviours and performance, capability is more about what is going on inside the person's head.

So, in this view, capable learning and teaching leaders need more than the knowledge and skills required for the completion of particular educational or administrative tasks, they need the intellectual, personal and interpersonal capacity to respond in effective ways to new situations as they arise. In this sense capability comprises the ability to identify and self-regulate leadership learning and development. As Stephenson (1992: 1) concludes, capability depends:

> … much more on our confidence that we can effectively use and develop our skills in complex and changing circumstances than on our mere possession of those skills.

The discussion so far is summarised in the box below.

Competence	Capability
Relevant skills & knowledge that are delivered to a set standard in a specific context	Ability to figure out when and when not to deploy these competencies, and a capacity to refine, update and develop them
Ability to deliver/perform	Ability to learn
Performance	Creativity
Ability to deliver set tasks in specific and relatively predictable situations	Ability to deliver new approaches in complex, uncertain situations
A focus on the present	A focus on the future
Working productively and efficiently in situations that are stable	Working productively with instability and change

The above distinction has important implications for how academic leadership capabilities are defined, investigated, communicated, determined, assessed, developed and applied in universities.

In the present study the focus on capabilities as well as competencies has meant that particular attention has been given to developing the 'insider's view' on how the 513 experienced academic leaders who participated in the study respond to, think their way through, and resolve the key challenges and dilemmas associated with each of the roles investigated; along with how they learn and develop in each role. As we shall see in Chapter Four, competencies emerge as being necessary for effective performance as a leader but they are not sufficient. As already emphasised, it is the application of one's emotional intelligence and intellectual capabilities to determine when and when not to deploy them that make the difference. It is a focus that, therefore, looks at leadership in context and from the inside out, not just from the outside in.

The empirical literature on leadership capability in higher education

In the higher education leadership literature there is regular reference to academic leadership qualities such as integrity, courage and passion, trustworthiness, consideration, responsiveness, adaptability, being able to adapt and change, to envision alternative futures, to develop people and collaborative partnerships, to create a positive and collegial working atmosphere, being both supportive and able to get necessary support, and being able to influence others positively (Drew, 2006; Middlehurst, 1993, 2004; Sathye, 2004; Vilkinas & Cartan, 2005; Bryman, 2007; Barge and Musambira, 1992).

Brungardt (1998, p. 2) claims that collaborative leadership works best in post-secondary and higher education because it models what effective teachers do to help students learn. This notion of 'leader as model' aligns with Martin et al's (2003: 257–258) findings in their study of the links between university subject coordinators' leadership and teachers' approach to teaching:

> … we have shown that the more collaborative approaches to the leadership of teaching at the individual subject level are associated with more conceptual, change-oriented and student-focused approaches to teaching. Given that other research has shown that these more conceptual change and student-focused approaches to teaching are associated with deeper approaches to learning (Trigwell et al, 1999) this study would suggest that the way in which teachers experience the leadership of their departments is an important precursor to the quality of student learning processes and outcomes in their departments.

The notion of leader as both a learner and a coordinator of staff learning for change (Ramsden, 1998; Kotter, 1992; Scott, 1999; Scott, 2003) is increasingly a feature of leadership frameworks and has links to the literature on 'learning organisations' (e.g. Lomas, 2004). In this regard, numerous studies, starting with Burns (1978), note the importance of transformational leadership (which is change and learning focused), not just transactional leadership (which is relationships focused).

In terms of transactional leadership, learning about oneself in relation to others is a notable feature of the leadership frameworks discussed by Montez (2005) and Drew (2006). The argument is that greater awareness of emotions in oneself and others can be used to better inform leadership and decision making (Montez, 2005). Drew's (2006) research in one Australian university found that the quality of interactions between people registered higher development needs than other areas relevant to academic leadership (e.g. strategic and operational management). Brungardt (1998) notes the links to effective teachers who can bring to bear both transactional and transformational approaches to learning.

Bensimon and colleagues (1989) concluded that no one set of traits will fit every situation. This focus on the 'contingent' nature of leadership in higher education is important and aligns with the broader base of literature on the area and the input from the national workshops in the current study. It is closely aligned with the increasing interest in 'adaptability' associated with the need for universities to regularly adjust what they do to remain in alignment with the continuously shifting operating environment outlined in Chapter Two and the need for different approaches to suit different circumstances. What is less well understood is how the combination of capabilities enables (or disables) leaders to create and manage change. Nor has the issue of what leaders do when things go wrong been investigated. Recent capability research in school leadership attempts to tackle such issues (e.g. Scott, 2003) but this area is still relatively unexplored in higher education.

The central points made in Bensimon's monograph generally align with the key findings from Scott's studies of effective principals (2003) and studies of successful graduates (Vescio, 2005). From this research Scott concluded that it is the combination of capabilities and competencies (emotional, cognitive, skills and knowledge) that counts; that the particular combination that is most effective depends on the situation; that everyone is a leader in their own area of expertise; and that staff motivation to change is a critical ingredient for engagement. Consistent with contingent notions of leadership, capabilities that foster the ability to 'read' and 'match' (Hunt, 1971) and work with the paradoxical nature of change management in a continuously shifting human and technical environment both at the local and external levels have been found to be particularly important (e.g. Blackmore and Sachs, 2003; Blackmore & Sachs, 2007). As Harrison and Brodeth (1999) note:

> Take, for example, resistance to change. Here Green (1997) pointed out that higher education around the world embodies the paradox of resisting change and preserving enduring values while undergoing permanent transformation.

Scott (1999) refers to a leader's capacity to manage paradox as the ability to figure out where to put the 'and' when seeking to balance, for example, top-down and bottom-up strategies to change management, listening and leading, stability and change, work and family (see also Thompson & Harrison, 2000). Drew (2006) argues that achieving balance is an increasing issue to be addressed.

A number of studies offer detailed accounts of what leaders should know and be able to do. Ramsden (1998: 4) suggests that effective leadership in higher education entails the following:

■   leadership in teaching (new ideas, creativity, exciting);

■   leadership in research;

■   strategic networking and vision;

■   transformational and collaborative leadership;

■   fair and efficient management;

■   development and recognition of performance; and

■   interpersonal skills.

These dimensions of leadership capture not only what leaders might be expected to know and be able to do, but suggest how they should do it (e.g. fairly, efficiently). Other studies, including a small number from Australia (e.g. Ramsden, 1998; Drew, 2006), also shed light on the specific qualities deemed as important and necessary for leaders now and in the future.

Similar domains of focus and development can be seen in 360-degree leadership instruments and processes used in higher education, such as the Quality Leadership Profile (Drew, 2006). This framework identifies nine leadership factors in four areas:

Quality Leadership Profile

Area	Factor
Staff Motivation and Involvement	Staff Development Consultative Management Building a Team Environment
Strategic and Operational Management	Implementing Systems and Processes Making Decisions Innovation and Change
Client and Community Focus	Client Focus Community Outreach
Academic Leadership	Academic Leadership (Academics only)

Again, the Team Leader Index (TLI) 360-degree leadership instrument (KRG Consultants, 2007), which is currently used by nine Australian universities, is made up of 55 items clustered into 11 'critical leadership competencies':

■ Establishing focus

■ Influencing others

■ Drive to achieve

■ Attention to information

■ Interpersonal awareness

■ Improving performance

■ Focusing on customers

■ Building relationships

■ Fostering teamwork

■ Developing others

■ Empowering others.

Recent international research on leadership in school education (OECD, 2006) emphasises that leadership is more than just technique or timing; it is about the morally purposeful pursuit of change beyond individual achievement to a collective commitment to challenge inequality—in its broadest sense.

Other higher education researchers note that 'commander control' approaches to academic leadership fall well short of the requirements of dynamic, cross-functional teamwork (Green, 1998; Montez, 2003; Williams, 2001). Sinclair (2004), for example, highlights that in Australia:

> … the archetype is of the lone frontier settler who is stoic but resolute in the face of hardship. Such an image renders improbable a garrulous, emotionally expressive or more collectively oriented leader—women and many migrants from more group-based societies instantly struggle to earn respect in this context (p. 9).

Debowski and Blake (2004: 3–4) conclude that academic leaders of teaching and learning require the general attributes noted as being important for many leadership roles—for example, the ability to develop a collaborative and supportive culture and to provide opportunities to share knowledge between colleagues. However, they also suggest that the following capabilities and competencies specific to learning and teaching are also necessary:

■ a strong commitment to pedagogy, and an understanding that course design and curriculum development should be driven by a strong grasp of how learning occurs and the effects of different forms of teaching on student learning;

■ a sound awareness of the university, faculty and school, and teaching and learning policies;

■ knowledge of the curriculum areas and factors which need to be considered when designing relevant and effective curricula;

■ the ability to evaluate and review courses and programs;

■ the capacity to analyse and evaluate curriculum content for relevance, suitability, currency and uniqueness;

■ an understanding of student needs and learning styles; and

■ ongoing development of new teaching strategies (such as flexible learning).

Aziz et al. (2005) examined the knowledge, skills and abilities required of department chairs in one large university (20,000 students) in the USA. Their mixed method study sought to identify and better understand the requirements for this leadership role. They reviewed the literature, interviewed 18 department chairs and school directors around a critical incident the leader had experienced in the role, and they surveyed all university Chairs, School Directors, Associate Deans and Deans at the university (N=92) on the identified knowledge, skills and abilities. They received a 62 per cent response rate to the survey. The researchers concluded that these leaders required (our classification):

Staff management and relations

- the ability to deal with and provide feedback for unsatisfactory faculty;
- skill in reducing, resolving, and preventing conflict among faculty members;
- knowledge of procedures for dealing with sexual harassment;
- ability to maintain faculty morale;
- knowledge of procedures pertaining to the promotion and tenure of faculty;
- knowledge of policies and procedures for promoting and terminating staff;
- knowledge of policies and procedures for evaluating staff;
- knowledge of procedures concerning matters of confidentiality;
- knowledge of faculty recruitment policies and procedures;
- knowledge of policies and procedures concerning faculty grievances;

Funding and budget

- knowledge of internal and external sources of funds;
- knowledge of policies and procedures for obtaining external funding;
- ability to acquire external funding for the department or program;
- skill in preparing and managing department or program budgets;
- ability to read and interpret budget reports;

Cognitive capabilities

- skill in adopting different leadership styles to fit varying situations;
- skill in decision-making under ambiguous circumstances;

Students and learning

- ability to promote high quality teaching in the department or program;
- knowledge of policies and procedures concerning student grievances.

Finally, Robinson et al. (2008) in their macroanalysis of leadership studies in education have noted that the traditions of instructional leadership and transformational leadership are starting to integrate.

It is important to bring together all of the above and highly varied findings into a single, integrated picture of academic leadership capability. What is necessary to give the investigation of learning and teaching leadership and development in universities coherence is, therefore, "a framework which explains graphically or in narrative form, the main dimensions to be studied – the key factors or variables – and the presumed relationships amongst them" (Miles and Huberman, 1984).

The study's leadership capability framework

Figure 1 identifies the conceptual framework for academic leadership capability, which has guided the study and been tested, validated and explained by it. It is directly based upon a framework already validated in studies of successful early career graduates in nine professions (Vescio 2005) and in a detailed study of 322 effective school leaders (Scott, 2003), and it accommodates all of the literature reviewed above.
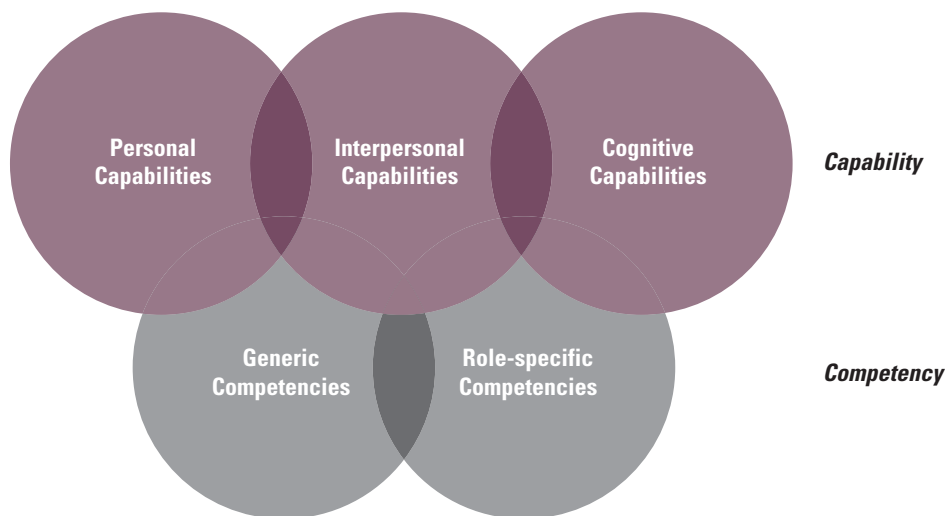
Figure 1 Academic leadership capability framework

Figure 1 identifies three overlapping aspects of leadership capability—personal, interpersonal and cognitive. These domains are underpinned by two linked forms of skill and knowledge: generic competencies like the ability to organise, run meetings, use IT, and an understanding of how universities work; and role-specific competencies (in this case a high level of skill and understanding about learning and teaching in higher education).

The overlapping nature of the framework indicates that all five dimensions are necessary for effective performance as an academic leader and that the five domains identified both feed into and off each other.

For example, we have clear evidence in both this study and those that have preceded it, that one's capability as a leader is not tested when things are running smoothly but when something goes wrong, when something unexpected happens or, in the unique context of higher education, when one is confronted by a change averse or passive university culture.

Personal and Interpersonal Capabilities

At such times it is important for leaders first to be able to manage their own emotional reactions to the uncertainty and discomfort; for example, not to overreact, to tolerate the uncertainty and to be able to remain calm. At the same time, as all key challenges of academic leadership have a human dimension, it is important to have a high level of interpersonal capability in order to better understand what is happening and to sort out what might work best to resolve the situation. Both personal and interpersonal capabilities have been extensively researched over the past decade by people like Dan Goleman (1998; 2000) and are often referred to as a leader's 'emotional intelligence':

> Emotional intelligence refers to the capacity for recognising our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.
>
> Goleman (1998)

The importance of emotional intelligence emerges from several analyses of higher education leadership. For example, higher educators in Ramsden's (1998: 87ff) studies of what makes for effective practice as an academic leader identified the importance of a wide range of attributes associated with emotional intelligence. In terms of the personal capability domain in Figure One, for example, Ramsden (1998: 87–90) reports attributes of effective practice in academic leadership from two studies. These include: being motivated to excellence, commitment to the job, leading by example, having integrity, being willing to learn from mistakes, and being determined. In terms of the interpersonal capability domain in Figure One, Ramsden (1998: 87–90) reports the importance of attributes like: being empathetic and responsive; an ability to motivate others; being able to listen, delegate and allow ideas to surface; encouraging initiative; building action groups; acknowledging others' work; and helping staff learn.

Other studies in higher education have also highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence in effective leadership. For example, Montez (2003: 6) identifies leaders "having to efficiently and effectively resolve the tensions that arise in the process of adapting". The idea of listening and responding appropriately to others and of reading social dynamics is central to the "community building" aspect of Wolverton and Gmelch's (2002: 35) definition of academic leadership. Aziz et al's (2005) analysis of leadership identifies the importance of the leaders being able to maintain faculty morale and their skill in reducing, resolving, and preventing conflict among faculty members. Martin et al's (2003) study focused on the social and personal dimensions of leadership and highlighted the collaborative and non-collaborative thinking and practice of Heads of Departments and Subject Coordinators in large first-year subjects.

Cognitive capability

The dimension of cognitive capability in Figure 1 refers to a leader's capacity to diagnose accurately what is happening when the unexpected occurs, to identify what the human as well as technical or administrative dimensions are, to determine if the problem is worth addressing in detail, and then having the ability to match an appropriate course of action to this diagnosis. Donald Schön explored

how this form of contingent intelligence operates in a wide range of occupations in his 1983 book *The Reflective Practitioner*.

> When a practitioner makes sense of a situation he perceives to be unique, he sees it as something already in his repertoire … It is to see the unfamiliar situation as both similar to and different from the familiar one … The familiar situation functions as a precedent, or a metaphor, or – in Thomas Kuhn's phrase – an exemplar of the unfamiliar one … It is our capacity to *see-as* and *do-as* that allows us to have a feel for problems that don't fit existing rules.
>
> Schön (1983: 138–40)

Goleman (2000) reports that the 'contingent' use of six complementary management styles works best in business contexts: the coercive style (which focuses on compliance in a crisis); the authoritative style (which mobilises people toward a vision); the affiliative style (which focuses on creating harmony); the democratic style (which seeks to forge consensus through participation); the pacesetting style (which sets high standards for performance); and the coaching style (which seeks to help people improve performance and develop new leaders).

> Leaders who have mastered four or more – especially the authoritative, democratic, affiliative and coaching styles – have the very best climate and business performance. And the most effective leaders switch flexibly among leadership styles as needed … such leaders don't mechanically match their style to fit a checklist of situations—they are far more fluid. They are exquisitely sensitive to the impact they are having on others and seamlessly adjust their style to get the best results. These are leaders, for example, who can read in the first minutes of a conversation that a talented but underperforming employee has been demoralised.
>
> Goleman (2000: 87–88)

David Hunt (1970 and 1971)[3] captured this notion in his research on successful educators when he identified that the best of them were able to 'read' each student, group of students and learning situation and 'match' an appropriate course of action to this reading (diagnosis). It is an intellect, therefore, that is skilled not just at problem solving but at working out what the problem is. This has close links to the notion of reflection-in-action (Scott, 1999: 161).

As concluded in an earlier book entitled *Change Matters* (Scott, 1999: 122–123):

> Only when (change leaders) have a better handle on what the problem might really be … (do) they set about designing a way of changing the situation … That is, they seek to 'custom tailor' or match a plan of action that seems to best suit the unique requirements, limits and possibilities of the situation. In this way their response is 'contingent' upon their reading of the situation … Then they act—that is they put their plan into action and assess the effects … In this way they ultimately come to understand the problem only by trying to change it … If their selected solutions don't work, they conclude that their interpretation of the problem was inaccurate and the spiral starts again. In this way research, learning, action and workplace improvement are constantly intermingled in the spiral staircase of continuous change.

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3   Hunt's groundbreaking book in 1971 describes models to coordinate student characteristics with educational environments, and describes how educators can be trained to provide such environments. It identifies the general characteristics of matching models, objectives, the characteristics of the person the characteristics of the environment that must be taken into account, then the nature of the person-environment interaction, and presents three specific examples of matching models that work.

Ramsden's (1998: 87–90) studies of effective leadership also identified similar cognitive attributes to those noted above. They include: being a strategic and contingent thinker, not a linear one; knowing what is achievable; having a clear but flexible vision and set of goals; and being able to plan ahead and not just be reactive.

Clearly a high level of interpersonal capability is necessary to undertake the process of 'reading' and 'matching', and an ability to personally manage the uncertainty and ambiguity of an unresolved situation is needed if one is to be able to clearly and effectively think through what is causing the troubling situation and figure out how best to respond. It is in this way that the three top circles in Figure 1 are interlaced—one cannot function without the other two being present.

Key competencies

Also integrated into this process is a leader's level of generic and role-specific skill and knowledge (the bottom circles in Figure 1). These areas of competence help provide not only a scaffold for diagnosis but also a source for shaping the right response and delivering it in partnership with all the other players concerned.

It is in this way that the leader's ability to manage change is linked directly to the discussion so far about capability and competence and to our view that it is most tested when uncertainty and change are in the air.

Summary

The framework in Figure One helps clarify how effective leaders work with, learn from and respond to changing circumstances. It allows for the fact that academic leadership is a highly contextualised phenomenon. It blends the competency and capability perspectives on leadership. It emphasises that possessing a high level of skill and knowledge about how one's university operates or what makes for a productive approach to learning and teaching is necessary but is not sufficient for effective leadership in higher education. What is essential is the highly developed emotional intelligence and a contingent way of thinking that enables one to know when (and when not) to deploy (or add to) these competencies. It is in this way that Figure One seeks to show how capability and competence, leadership and management are all necessary for effective leadership of change—the key priority for learning and teaching leadership in the operating context outlined in detail in Chapter Two.

Academic leadership capability scales

Below, each of the five dimensions of capability and competence identified in Figure 1 are given operational meaning by outlining the specific subscales and items that have been validated and then explored for their relative importance with the 513 academic leaders who completed the study's online survey and the review of the outcomes at the national and international workshops (Chapter Four).

As noted earlier, the items have already been tested in studies of successful early career graduates in 9 professions (Vescio, 2005) and in a large study of effective school leaders (Scott, 2003). Interestingly, as will be seen later, the ones that are rated highest by individuals align directly with those organisational values and attributes that characterise the most change capable universities in the current context (Appendix Three). Furthermore, they align with the distinguishing attributes of effective higher education teachers.

Personal capabilities

Table 1 presents the scales and items developed to provide measurement of the domain of personal leadership capability. This aspect of a leader's capability is made up of three interlocked components: Self-regulation, Decisiveness and Commitment.

Aspects of these personal capabilities have been noted in other studies. In addition to the research already cited (e.g. Ramsden, 1998: 87–90), Robinson and Timperley (2007) have identified the importance of self-regulation, and Bryman (2007) identifies the importance of decisiveness.

Table 1 Personal capability scales and items

Scale	Item
Self Regulation	Deferring judgment and not jumping in too quickly to resolve a problem
	Understanding my personal strengths and limitations
	Admitting to and learning from my errors
	Bouncing back from adversity
	Maintaining a good work/life balance and keeping things in perspective
	Remaining calm under pressure or when things take an unexpected turn
Decisiveness	Being willing to take a hard decision
	Being confident to take calculated risks
	Tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty
	Being true to one's personal values and ethics
Commitment	Having energy, passion and enthusiasm for learning and teaching
	Wanting to achieve the best outcome possible
	Taking responsibility for program activities and outcomes
	Persevering when things are not working out as anticipated
	Pitching in and undertaking menial tasks when needed

Interpersonal capabilities

Table 2 presents the scales and items developed to provide measurement of a leader's interpersonal capabilities. This has been distinguished into two subscales: Influencing and Empathising with others.

Table 2 Interpersonal capability scales and items

Scale	Item
Influencing	Influencing people's behaviour and decisions in effective ways
	Understanding how the different groups that make up my university operate and influence different situations
	Working with very senior people within and beyond my university without being intimidated
	Motivating others to achieve positive outcomes
	Working constructively with people who are 'resistors' or are over-enthusiastic
	Developing and using networks of colleagues to solve key workplace problems
	Giving and receiving constructive feedback to/from work colleagues and others
Empathising	Empathising and working productively with students from a wide range of backgrounds
	Listening to different points of view before coming to a decision
	Empathising and working productively with staff and other key players from a wide range of backgrounds
	Developing and contributing positively to team-based programs
	Being transparent and honest in dealings with others

Cognitive capabilities

Table 3 presents the scales and items developed to provide measurement of the domain of cognitive capability. This aspect of a leader's capability is made up of attributes that fit into three interlocked subscales: Diagnosis, Strategy and Flexibility, and Responsiveness.

Table 3 Cognitive capability scales and items

Scale	Item
Diagnosis	Diagnosing the underlying causes of a problem and taking appropriate action to address it
	Recognising how seemingly unconnected activities are linked
	Recognising patterns in a complex situation
	Identifying from a mass of information the core issue or opportunity in any situation
Strategy	Seeing and then acting on an opportunity for a new direction
	Tracing out and assessing the likely consequences of alternative courses of action
	Using previous experience to figure out what's going on when a current situation takes an unexpected turn
	Thinking creatively and laterally
	Having a clear, justified and achievable direction in my area of responsibility
	Seeing the best way to respond to a perplexing situation
	Setting and justifying priorities for my daily work
Flexibility and Responsiveness	Adjusting a plan of action in response to problems that are identified during its implementation
	Making sense of and learning from experience
	Knowing that there is never a fixed set of steps for solving workplace problems

In terms of the diagnosis scale in Table 3, the ability to determine what is really causing a problem and to assess its significance is a key capability. This entails the process of 'reading' the signs and situation in the ways discussed earlier. The process of 'reading' has been found to be particularly enhanced if the leader has been in the role for a considerable period of time and, with the help of a validated and situated framework like the one discussed in this chapter, has been both willing and able to reflect effectively on and thereby learn from experience (Boud, 1985). This process develops a set of 'diagnostic maps' that enables the practitioner to *see-as*, *do-as*, along the lines identified by Donald Schön (1983):

> How do effective managers of ongoing educational change develop the 'diagnostic maps' (meaning giving schemes) with which they make sense of what lies behind change situations? First, they need to have had previous experience working in situations similar to their present one. Second, they need to have reflected on this experience, to have worked out why things went well and why they didn't. This learning from experience is best done if they use overall frameworks like those put forward in this book.
>
> Scott (1999: 162).

In more recent higher education leadership studies, Wolverton and Gmelch (2002: 114), for instance, speak of the development of "mental models [and] frameworks" as part of what is required for Deans to understand their roles. They propose that such models are often likely to be unique to particular roles, and that learning these plays an important part in learning the role. Knight and Trowler (2001: 168) write of learning "situational knowledge" related to understanding contingencies that are likely to play a role in departmental life.

This, as we shall see in Chapter Five, has important implications for a new approach to academic leadership development and learning.

In terms of the strategy scale, in a study undertaken in the mid-1990s with successful Deans (Scott and Kemmis, 1996[4]), the following were consistently identified as being key ingredients in delivering the role effectively: the ability to 'think contingently'; see 'the forest for the trees' and set a vision for where the faculty should head; along with an ability to accurately determine priorities for action; identify talent and make links and trace out the consequences of competing ways to respond, and select the most productive one.

More recently, in the *Campus Review* (2006: 3) senior academic leadership survey "almost 98% (of the 124 senior academic respondents from 35 Australian universities) considered being entrepreneurial important, with regards to being successful in their position".

In terms of 'contingent thinking', Aziz et al. (2005) have identified the importance of adopting different leadership styles to fit varying situations, and the importance of being able to make decisions under ambiguous circumstances.

In their analysis of Deans, Wolverton and Gmelch (2002: 35) speak of "setting directions" as involving an "orient[ation] toward actions rather than maintaining the status quo", "consider[ing] how a specific plan of action might be extended to benefit others", and "hav[ing] plans that extend beyond the immediate future".

As already noted, Boud (1985) has identified the importance of learning from experience in the development of professional capability.

Relevant Skills and Knowledge

As the bottom circles in Figure 1 indicate, role-specific and generic skills and knowledge that are known to be instrumental in effective academic leadership are also required. As noted earlier this has links to the competency movement and to the development of lists of discrete tasks to be performed to set standards, and the key knowledge incumbents of particular roles are expected to possess.

Table 4 presents the scales and items that make up the competency component of the study's academic leadership framework. They are divided into specific skills and knowledge concerned with the area of learning and teaching and two clusters of more generic skills and knowledge—one focused on university operations and the other on self-organisation.

The items accommodate the key areas identified in the earlier research reviewed above. They were further enhanced by the study's National Steering Committee and during discussions with the Project Reference Group.

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4   Cited Scott (1999: 158–9).

Table 4 Leadership competency scales and items

Scale	Item
Learning and Teaching	Understanding how to develop an effective higher education learning program
	Having a high level of up-to-date knowledge of what engages university students in productive learning
	Understanding how to design and conduct an evaluation of a higher education learning program
	Understanding how to implement successfully a new higher education program
	Being on top of current developments in learning and teaching
	Knowing how to identify and disseminate good learning and management practice across the unit or university
University Operations	Understanding the role of risk management and litigation in my work
	Understanding how universities operate
	Understanding of industrial relations issues and processes as they apply to higher education
	Being able to help my staff learn how to deliver necessary changes effectively
	An ability to chair meetings effectively
	Having sound administrative and resource management skills
Self-organisation Skills	Being able to manage my own ongoing professional learning and development
	Being able to use IT effectively to communicate and perform key work functions
	Being able to organise my work and manage time effectively
	Being able to make effective presentations to a range of different groups

As already noted, the possession of these skill and knowledge components of academic competence is necessary but it is not sufficient for effective performance as a leader. For this to occur the capabilities identified in the top three circles of Figure 1 have to be present and all five components have to work in an integrated and productive way over time. As this suggests, a weakness in one area will affect the operation of the others. For example, someone unable to remain calm when things take an unwelcome turn will not be able to use a well developed cognitive ability or draw appropriately on all that they know about university operations or learning and teaching. Simply knowing and being able to do a lot does not, of itself, constitute effective leadership of either learning or change.

Summary

In this chapter the key concepts of academic leadership, management, capability and competence that underpin the study have been clarified and a profile of academic leaders in Australia has been given. Finally a detailed review of the existing literature and the outcomes of earlier studies of effective professional and academic performance have been used to both generate and explain the academic leadership capability framework that has guided and been tested by the present study.

What emerges is how important it is for academic leaders to be able to deal with change. It is to making sense of the continuously and rapidly changing context in which they must undertake this work that we now turn.

Chapter 1 : Understanding Academic Leadership

02

The New Context of
Academic Leadership

> All of the education leaders (in the US) we interviewed understand the importance of more market-oriented, student-centred and businesslike management and accountability strategies, while preserving their academic mission, focus and values ... The four greatest challenges facing higher education today (are): student engagement, institutional accountability, revenue generation and globalisation.
>
> Segall & Freedman, (2007: 1-2)

> I believe, and I am not alone, that we are witnessing a seismic shift in higher education ... embracing the unprecedented opportunities offered by the global technology-fuelled society and embracing collaboration are the major strategies for survival in this new world ... (However, we) have to ask ourselves some tough questions about the production of some of our teaching materials, not only because our model is an expensive one but also because it is relatively slow in a world growing so accustomed to the swift satisfaction of consumer needs ... Otherwise, while we are all talking about diploma supplements and Erasmus programmes and whether or not we believe in quality assurance, China and India are going to come and take our lunch.
>
> Gourley (2007)

Leadership of learning and teaching is invariably shaped by complex societal, organisational, political and personal contexts. For this reason, before homing in on the day-to-day experience of our academic leaders, the study first sought to provide a comprehensive and integrated picture of the various change forces they have to confront and navigate.

This aspect of the study has identified how broader social, political, economic, technological and demographic changes within and beyond Australia over the past quarter of a century have triggered a set of higher education specific change forces, which, in turn, have interacted with a set of local institutional and cultural factors. The key point is that the factors outlined are intertwined and feed into and off each other. The key implication is that they make effective change management and implementation the central imperatives for universities and their leaders if they are not only to survive but thrive in the new, more volatile operating context now faced.

This chapter sets the scene for the following chapter where the study's findings on how our leaders are responding to and dealing with this rapidly changing context are discussed.

Broader change forces

Some of the developments that have unfolded over recent decades are not specific to universities but nevertheless have had profound implications for them. Change forces of this type were identified and discussed at the study's national and international workshops. They include:

The global economy

The rapid emergence of the new, 'connected' global economy, including the emergence of large multi-national corporations that operate beyond state jurisdiction, and a rapid growth in cross-border transactions.

> One of the major transforming factors, enabled by advances in communications and information technology, is that of globalisation through the mobility of ideas, capital and people. In this new context, we are witnessing new formations of globally-networked companies and cities and new roles for research universities.
>
> Group of Eight (2007: 14)

The emergence of new world players

> While U.S. higher education has long been admired internationally, our continued pre-eminence is no longer something we can take for granted. The rest of the world is catching up, and by some measures has already overtaken us. We have slipped to 12th in higher education attainment.
>
> Segall & Freedman (2007: 9)[5]

Good examples of new world players economically as well as educationally are India and China. These are countries that see investment in higher education as a key element in their strategic development and have experienced a startling increase in higher education participation rates over the past five years. They are also putting in place a dramatic improvement in the quality of their provision:

> The European Commissioner for Education, Jan Figel told The Times Newspaper (in May 2007) that he expects Chinese and Indian universities to overtake UK, French and German universities in international rankings within a decade unless they work hard to improve quality and access.
>
> Campus Review (29 May 2007: 7)

China already has more students enrolled in its higher education system than the US-some 16 million. It is reported that more people are learning English in China than speak it worldwide.

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5   See also OECD (2005): *Education at a glance*, tables A3.1 and C2.2.

Global warming

The impact of global warming and environmental (and social) sustainability have emerged as key political, national, international, research and learning themes for the new century.

Exit of the baby boomers

The imminent retirement of the baby-boomer generation is expected to have a dramatic impact on the staffing profiles and leadership of our universities over the coming decade (Anderson, Johnson & Saha, 2002; Hugo: 2004, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c; Winchester, 2005). As Graham Hugo, an Australian Research Council Federation Fellow and Professor of Demography observed at a conference in May 2007:

> Universities in most OECD nations now face the largest recruitment task since the 1960s and 1970s.

In some universities it is predicted that up to half of their senior staff may retire in the next five years. In others, with the removal of mandatory retirement, it is anticipated that many of the older senior leaders may stay on into their '70s. For example, Clark & d'Ambrosio (2005) report studies in US higher education that show the retirement rates at age 70 are now 45 percentage points higher than they were prior to 1994 when mandatory retirement existed. This, however, will simply push back the inevitable. Recruitment of replacements for the baby boomers is going to be excessively difficult as this will occur simultaneously across all developed countries and the 1970s' strategy of filling the gap through recruitment of academics from overseas will not work. At the same time, because of the 'bunching' caused by the baby boomers, the number of new academics entering universities over the past decade has decreased significantly (Winchester, 2005).

The CIT revolution

How exactly to handle the relentless development of a wide range of communication and information technologies, their rapid influx into our daily lives, the exponential growth in computing power and the rapid expansion of internet speeds is posing a major challenge for universities and colleges at the present time.[6]

The CIT revolution is creating a new set of expectations and opportunities for how students want to and can learn. It is creating challenges around the extent to which higher education should remain campus-based or become more 'distributed', especially given the increased difficulty of travel in large cities and the potential for people to work productively for at least part of their week at home. Already, traditional universities are no longer viewed as the sole, or even key, repository of leading edge knowledge or necessarily as being the best place to access it.

The issues of access and equity, including those associated with the 'digital divide', continue to create moral and political dilemmas. As Sir John Daniel, Chair of the Commonwealth of Learning, recently observed at the CHEA International Commission Conference in Washington, DC:

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6   These changes pose not only educational challenges but throw into relief issues around privacy, plagiarism, I.P., security, assessment quality, records, identity fraud, hacking and data breaches. The Privacy Rights Clearing House, for example, points out that currently some 155 million records have been reported as being affected by security breaches.

> To date the growth of higher education in the developing world has been constrained by various factors, notably cost. But today spreading connectivity, allied with the massive creation of open educational resources based on open-source technology, could create the radical reduction in costs necessary for higher education to serve the four billion people at the bottom of the world's economic pyramid. Were that to happen it would generate over a hundred million more students.
>
> Sir John Daniel (2007)

Cheaper travel

A significant drop in real terms in the costs of air travel has opened up opportunities for many students, mainly still from an advantaged background, to study offshore. Compared with 1982 prices (adjusted for inflation) airfares are approximately 66% cheaper today.[7]

Change forces specifically connected with higher education

Other changes over the past quarter century have been more directly connected to the daily operations of the university and have brought with them a wide range of pressures on their funding, support and operation. Developments of this type have been fed by the broader change forces outlined above and include:

Opening up of access

In the developed world, the proportion of the population gaining access to higher education opportunities has grown dramatically since the 1970s-for example, in Australia 10% of Australian school leavers went to university in the 1970s; it is now 30%. The growing diversity of students that has resulted from this 'massification' process has created additional challenges for higher educators and for retention.

As a senior academic leader at the national workshops on the study's results observed:

> The diversification of the student body today means we need particularly deft learning and teaching leaders to ensure that what is delivered works.

There are also associated links to a suggested decrease in the status of academic work (Ramsden, 1998: 6-7; 12).

In 2004 tertiary education attainment for the 25-34 age group ranged from 56.1% in the Russian Federation, 53.3% in Canada, 51.6% in Japan, 49.1% in South Korea, 42.3% in Sweden, 40% in Ireland, to 39% in the US and 36.2% in Australia (OECD, 2007).

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7   Carol Sottoli discussed the U.S. situation in this regard in the *Washington Post* (at: washingtonpost.com) on April 11th 2007. She reported the following findings from an analysis undertaken by airfare expert Terry Trippler: In 1982 an airfare to Denver from New York cost $257 ($547 in today's dollars considering CPI), in 2007 it costs $158; Minneapolis/St. Paul: $249 ($530) in 1982, $188 today; Nashville: $170 ($362) in 1982, $212 today; Seattle: $298 ($634) in 1982, $198 today.

In the developing world the growth in higher education participation rates has been equally impressive, albeit off a very low base and with some notable exceptions:

> There is no doubt about the demand. For two decades worldwide enrolment growth has exceeded the most optimistic forecasts. A milestone of 100 million enrolments was passed some years ago, and an earlier forecast of 120 million students by 2020 looks likely to be reached by 2010. Indeed, if part-time students are counted, numbers have already passed 130 million. Growth is, if anything, accelerating as more governments see the rapid expansion of higher education as key to their transition to developed country status.
>
> Thus in China enrolments doubled between 2000 and 2003. By 2005, with 16 million students, China had overtaken the US as the world's largest higher education system.
>
> Growth has been rapid in other developing countries as well-but usually from a very low base. Across the world there is a massive disparity in the higher education participation rates of people between 18 and 23 years old (known as Age Participation Rates, or APRs). APRs of around 50 percent are now the norm in developed countries, whereas in numerous countries in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa they languish below 10 percent.
>
> <div align="right">Daniel (2007)</div>

Along with the rapid increase in the percentage of the population attending university in both developed and developing countries, has come the challenge of managing the transition of many of the students who are first in their family to attend university. These people are often uncertain about tertiary study but, once alerted to how university learning works, they perform well. However, this transition assistance comes at a cost and is putting additional pressure on cash-strapped institutions. It also creates significant challenges for academics faced by more students from a wider diversity of backgrounds (Wolverton et al. 1999).

Changes in funding

> We simply need a more stable and secure level of resources. It is a fact that in our state, like most, Medicare, K-12 and prisons are going to take increasingly larger percentages of the budget, while higher education is seen as being more part of the discretionary budget.
>
> <div align="right">Harvey Perlman, Chancellor, University of Nebraska Lincoln</div>
> <div align="right">(cited Segall and Freedman, 2007: 7)</div>

The dramatic rise in higher education participation rates has created increased pressure on funding for the sector, especially from state sources. For example, over the past 25 years there has been a significant decrease in government funding per capita for higher education students in many countries. In Australia, Professor Alan Robson, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Western Australia, reported in a keynote address at the 2006 Australian Universities Quality Forum that funding per EFTSL (Equivalent Full Time Student Load) was two-thirds what it had been in 1976 (something noted earlier by Wolverton et al., 1999, and discussed in more detail in an article by Conor King in Campus Review, February 2008). In the US, David L. Kirp [2003: 131-2] reports "nationwide between 1980 and 2000, the share of universities' operating expenses paid for by state tax dollars was cut by 30%".

In the UK, Middlehurst & Garrett (2002: 1) report that "the higher education sector - a twelve billion pound industry - is both competing for scarce public resources and is diversifying its sources

of income. A recent funding council estimate suggested that public funds supply approximately 60% of all UK higher education funding, with proportions of state to non-state funding varying widely across institutions (from approximately 90% of public funding to as little as 20%)".

The following headline story in the Higher Education Supplement of The Australian Newspaper on 30 May 2007 indicates the sorts of impact this trend is having:

> Ferocious competition, a move into less specialised courses, and more local students on full fees are expected as a shake-out sparked by a (recently announced) 40 percent cut in federal funding for university business courses ... Many business faculties say the move spells an end to the era of growth.

It must be noted that there has always been considerable variation between countries on the extent to which funding for higher education research comes from government, charitable or business sources. For example, the US has a strong tradition of funding for higher education being assisted by a range of charitable foundations and from a culture of giving to one's alma mater. In countries like Australia this is not the case.

Pressure to generate new sources of income

The per capita decrease in state funding has triggered a parallel pressure for universities to generate 'new sources' of income. The extent of the shift can be seen in the case of Australia where the contribution of non-government sources of income to higher education has grown from 10% in the 1970s to more than 50% currently, with some universities having as little as 20% of their total revenue coming from the state.

This has led some universities into seeing their prime focus as having to be on the 'bottom line' on profit, commodification of knowledge and its marketing:

> Entrepreneurial ambition, which used to be regarded in academe as a necessary evil, has become a virtue ... The new vocabulary of customers and stakeholders, niche marketing and branding and winner-take-all, embodies this shift in the higher education 'industry'... Each department is a 'revenue center', each student a customer, each professor an entrepreneur, each party a 'stakeholder' and each institution a seeker after profit, whether in money capital or intellectual capital ... Opting out of the fray by fleeing the market is not a realistic possibility... maintaining communities of scholars is not a concern of the market.
>
> <div align="right">Kirp (2003: 4 and 261)</div>

Because of this trend a new range of income-generating ventures, many with a much higher risk profile than that usually associated with a university, have emerged. This has triggered high levels of government concern about its own legal liability for failed financial ventures. This, in turn, has led to the introduction of a wide range of risk management measures, including a rapid increase in government monitoring, auditing, reporting requirements, and legislative shifts of legal liability to the governing bodies of universities; along with the introduction of a wide range of external quality evaluation and assurance systems and controlling legislation of which the Australian Universities Quality Agency is a good example.

As two senior academic leaders at the study's national workshops observed:

> We are faced by the complexity of the university now, including its move into generating a range of new sources of income and the need for leaders capable of assessing and managing the risk. There are far more influences and levels of uncertainty to juggle.
>
> There may be a huge mismatch between what people in higher education are employed for and what is now required. For example, many higher education staff are employed for investigative skills but we now want learning and teaching innovators, HR experts, entrepreneurs, marketers, strategists, fund raisers and money makers-people who can invent new ways of leveraging university resources to get income.

A trend towards user-pays

The decrease in government subsidies per capita has had another effect: a steady increase in the amount of money that students must personally pay for their higher education. This links to a parallel privatisation and 'user-pays' trend that has taken hold across many countries over the last quarter century.

Rapid growth in the 'higher education export market'

A key new source of income over the past decade for many higher education systems has been the 'higher education export market'. In Australia, the higher education export market has grown from virtually nil in 1976 to be now reportedly worth $10 billion per annum.

At a conference in May 2007 on trans-national education the Chief Executive of a Higher Education Quality Agency observed, when discussing the way the General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) is encouraging free trade in the higher education export market, that:

> What is new is that higher education is now seen as a service commodity for profit that can be exported and imported. Furthermore the import-export divide is breaking down.

At the same conference it was reported that US Regional Accreditation Boards are now being invited to accredit university programs in other countries in order to improve the national and international marketability of these programs.

Some predict that the 'international student market' will continue to grow at about 6% per annum into the foreseeable future. However, the pattern of growth may be quite different to that of the past decade. One new feature is the tendency, as domestic fees within many developed countries escalate, for local students to choose to take all or part of their degree overseas. This tendency towards 'two way internationalisation' in such countries is seen by many to be a desirable development. However, it may have an effect on the 'bottom line' for some universities, as traditional student markets from developing countries themselves find an increasing range of other countries offering to take them in as the quality and availability of their own home country operations grow rapidly. The state of the Australian dollar, international security and health scares are all additional variables that learning and teaching leaders have to factor in. At the cheaper end of the international student market, online learning providers are also expected to make significant incursions. However, predicting accurately the future of the 'higher education export market' remains excessively tricky.

Growing competition

The 'opening up' of the higher education sector to market forces, supported in Australia by a recent, significant change to the National Protocols for Higher Education, has seen a rapid influx of private local and international providers who anticipate that large profits can be made from high student fees. This, along with the recent drop in unemployment rates in a number of developed countries, has seen some universities struggling (often for the first time) to meet their load targets. This, in turn, has had an effect on their 'bottom line' and in some instances has seen the closure of faculties or departments and staff redundancies.

In short, there is no longer any safe domestic or international market and, as a consequence, there are no safe academic departments or jobs.

> Around the world higher education systems are being re-shaped through greater competition among established institutions, the growth of new providers, including not-for-profit and proprietary providers, and the growing capacity of on-line learning. There are multiple ways of obtaining qualifications, such as through product vendors, professional associations, and the training houses of global corporations. Additionally some non-university research institutions are seeking authority to offer degrees ... (In countries like Australia)... recently amended national protocols for the approval of higher education providers will facilitate the entry of new competitors.
>
> Group of Eight (2007: 18)

Maintaining standards

With the dramatic increase in participation rates and the drive to bring in new sources of income, including from full fee paying domestic and international students, have come questions about 'a drop in standards' and assertions that today's universities are really more like vocational education institutions than 'traditionally tertiary'.

Consider, for example, this observation in the journal *Nature*:

> Driving universities to compete for fee-paying students runs the risk of reshaping universities as sites of vocational training rather than as places of higher learning.
>
> Nature (2003: pp. 423 and 465)

It is for this reason that many universities have become increasingly interested in assuring the consistency and quality of what they do, in ensuring that what is promised is delivered with the same standard across all classes and campuses, and in establishing just exactly what retains and engages students in productive learning in each field of education they provide.[8]

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8   For a good overview of developments in quality management for higher education see: European Universities Association (2007).

An associated issue is 'grade inflation'. In an article published in the *Independent* on 13th December 2007, Andrew Oswald, professor of economics at Warwick University, observed:

> My worry is grade inflation. It may be extreme. In the 1992 RAE, the 55 oldest universities in the UK submitted a total of 1799 units to be assessed ... 18 per cent were given the top score of 5 ... (In) the 2001 RAE 1676 units of assessment were submitted by these same universities, and 55 per cent received a grade of five. Of course it could be that UK universities went up in quality over these ... years. But, if so, how come we had a striking decline in the United Kingdom's Nobel Prize performance?

Student as consumer

With the growth of the 'user-pays' philosophy for higher education and the significant increase in the fees paid by the student, a 'student-as-consumer' movement has rapidly taken off. This has led to students being prepared to shift institution if they do not experience the quality and value-for-money they expect, something which we have seen can have a direct and negative impact on the university's 'bottom line'.

Blackmore & Sachs (2007), in their study of 180 women in a range of leadership roles in higher education, vocational education and schools, report how this links to a shift in perception of education being a positional good rather than a public one, and how this has changed the relationship between teachers and students from being a pedagogical to a more contractual one.[9]

For example, if a full fee paying student leaves a particular institution at the end of year one in a three-year program, the university loses the remaining two years' fee income-around $30,000 dollars. Lose just three students on this basis and you lose one annual staff salary. The student-as-consumer trend is also now resulting in a growth in 'truth in advertising' litigation against universities as students sue post-secondary institutions under provisions of statutes like Contract Law for not delivering what was promised in their prospectus.

Changing patterns of participation

More and more students are enrolled full time but are working a significant number of hours per week. For example, a 2006 Universities Australia student finance survey (Bexley, Devlin and Marginson, 2007) found that, consistent with the findings of previous studies, the typical Australian university student in 2006 was undertaking considerable paid work during semester: 70.6 per cent of full-time undergraduates reported working during semester, and on average these students were working 14.8 hours per week.

This trend is shaping a quite different set of expectations about university studies and ease of access to programs compared with even a decade ago.

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9   Blackmore and Sachs' (2007) book on the experiences of women leaders in universities, vocational education and schools was reviewed in a feature article in *Campus Review*, 14 January 2007: pgs 8–9.

As a learning and teaching leader at one of the study's national workshops noted:

> Student lifestyles have changed. Gen Y expectations have changed. Interaction with the university by many students who are working and studying full time is minimal.

Changing expectations from a new generation of students

Unlike earlier generations, it is estimated that Generation Y may have up to 20 jobs over their career. This creates a profound challenge for how universities structure their programs, and for their flexibility and responsiveness. It throws up decision-making dilemmas around how specifically focused programs should be, whether helping students learn 'how to learn' should be given more emphasis, and to what extent students want or should do the bulk of their higher education before they start their career. This is not a new dilemma, but the current context throws its importance into sharp relief.

In a paper presented at the 2006 Australian Association for Institutional Research Conference, Sally Nimon (Nimon, S. 2006) from the University of South Australia presented research on the distinguishing characteristics of Gen Y-the so-called Millennial generation of higher education students born after 1980.

Nimon suggests that Gen Y students are likely to expect access to all the university's services 24-7: 365 days a year; that they can be expected to have little institutional loyalty and will rapidly shift elsewhere if not happy; that they cannot be expected to engage in long term planning; that they tend to look for more immediate personal returns from their higher education than older generations; that they are likely to have different attitudes to web-based plagiarism and knowledge ownership, and look to the internet as their first port of call for information; that they expect to be consulted and catered to; that their strong peer group bonding can make them less competitive or interested in standards; and that they are more likely to expect a passing grade irrespective of the quality of what is handed in. It is the peer group, says Nimon, not older people, which shapes the Gen Y student response to a university. This can be seen in the widespread use of online sites like *Bored of Studies* or *My Space* to discuss which university to go to and how they perform.

Handling the challenge posed by this so called generation of 'digital natives' is now front and centre for higher education. For example, one of the most popular sessions at the 2007 annual meeting of academic librarians in Washington, DC was on how to help students who have learned many of their information gathering and analysis skills from video games apply that knowledge in the library. Speakers said that gaming skills are in many ways representative of a broader cultural divide between today's college students and those who hope to assist them.

Some have likened the current challenge in this area as being akin to people brought up with 33 rpm vinyl trying to teach people who are used to working with an MP3.

As a leader at the study's national workshops noted:

> The nature of academic work is changing-blended learning, reduced face-to-face hours in the traditional classroom, IT pedagogy are posing a real leadership challenge in relation to new people on the scene but a radical change for older people.

The moral imperative for universities

Much of the above traces the links between exponential changes in the operating environment of universities and their financial viability. However, there is an equally profound set of factors that relate not just to the financial but to the personal, moral and societal benefits of higher education. Retention at university matters. It matters morally, as we know the life chances of people who complete a degree are dramatically improved. And it matters nationally, as the higher the education level of the population the greater the nation's levels of productivity and innovation. In this regard the current track record in many countries is not good:

> In a recent study of Institutional Transformation it was reported that in the U.S. "National statistics showed that it took nearly 7 years, on average, to finish a 4-year degree. And a growing number of students failed ever to complete the degree. According to ACT's ongoing study of retention and completion, BA/BS completion rates at 4-year public colleges have been falling from a high of 52.8% in 1986 to a 20-year low of 39.5% in 2005.
>
> Moore, J. (2006)

It also matters internationally. As Colin Powell is reported to have said, there is "no more valuable asset to our country than the friendship of world leaders who have been educated here" (Segall, P. and Freedman, G. 2007: 9). Furthermore there is increasing recognition that higher education is an investment, not a cost:

> As we here in North Carolina have painfully learned, our people are no longer competing for jobs and work with just the citizens of South Carolina, Tennessee or Georgia. In today's knowledge-based global economy, we're competing head on with China, India, and dozens of other countries that are making tremendous strategic investments in education and research. The cold hard fact is that if we don't get more of our own people better educated, we'll lose the fight-a fight that if we shape up, we can still win.
>
> Erskine B. Bowles, President of University of North Carolina, Inaugural Address,
> 12 April 2006 (cited Segall, P and Freedman, G, 2007: 10)

Blackmore & Sachs (2007) identify the tension between the 20th century notion of a university as a place rooted in a sense of democratic and academic freedom and public service backed by government investment, and the more corporate, lean 21st century university with its clear strategic focus, line management structures and client service and industry orientation.

The interplay of the financial with the moral has created a core dilemma for many university leaders: how best to balance catering for market forces (and, as a consequence, achieving sustained financial viability) with delivering their mission (achieving their traditional moral and public purposes).

Mutual reinforcement of these change forces

It is already evident in discussing the above change forces how they both feed off and feed into each other.

For example, as global travel becomes easier and cheaper and as the internet becomes faster and more accessible, it becomes possible to expand into new higher education markets in ways unthought of a quarter of a century ago in order to fill the shortfall of government funds that has resulted from

the 'massification' of higher education over the same period. These developments have, in turn, increased simultaneously the level of competition possible from other countries, universities and private providers and led many universities to give increasing focus to the 'bottom line'.

Similarly, as the funding shortfall has been filled for domestic students by introducing a more user-pays system and as a general consumer-oriented culture has developed, some students have become increasingly willing to complain when they believe they are not getting 'value for money'. This can, as noted above, be expressed in a number of ways-by transferring to another university and taking their funding with them, by complaining, going to the press or litigating. Negative press can reduce attractiveness and a drop in applications can affect income, load and jobs. Judgements about the potential cost-benefit of accruing a large higher education debt versus taking up other options is, together with an increase in university places to be filled, further feeding a softening of demand in some more developed countries.

Again, the need to develop and secure new sources of income has directly generated the dilemmas of figuring out how best to balance mission with market, standards with retention, access with profit, risk with being entrepreneurial and so on.

And this is not something unique to Australian higher education. As Petrov et al. (2006) concluded in their Leadership Foundation for Higher Education study of 12 UK universities:

> It was widely acknowledged that the HE sector in the UK is undergoing a considerable period of change. Within the sector as a whole some of the main challenges include: changes in funding, competition over research profile, shifting demographics, and increasing regulation and scrutiny. Many of these issues are inter-connected, such as the introduction of student fees in England as a response to declining central funding leading to greater competition between institutions, increasing emphasis on developing a distinct and desirable university profile, and greater expectations from students and other stakeholders. All in all, the challenges faced by the sector are placing greater demands on institutions and the senior figures within them, greater visibility and accountability and increasing emphasis on the importance of effective management and leadership processes.

The local context counts

> The most challenging part of the leadership role for all levels seems to be dealing with the internal environment of the university, not the external.
>
> Senior Academic, National Workshop

The extent to which one's university is 'change ready' and 'change capable' is an important factor in helping or hindering leaders as they seek to develop and implement the many changes necessary to keep their institution in alignment with the new, more volatile operating context outlined above.

Cameron & Smart (1998: 72, 78) - cited by Harrison & Brodeth (1999) - identify a dirty dozen university attributes, which they say lead to poor performance:

> The all too familiar list includes: centralisation of power; short-term crisis mentality; loss of innovativeness; resistance to change; politicised interest groups; loss of trust; restricted communication (where only good news is passed upwards); lack of teamwork; scapegoating leaders; and (of less significance, in their analysis) decreasing morale and un-prioritised cutbacks.

This local context has a number of dimensions identified in earlier studies. These include: the nature and influence of local cultures ('the way we do things around here'); the extent to which the institution operates efficiently and in an integrated way; the extent to which administrative processes 'add value' to the core business of the institution; its image; its capacity to respond promptly and wisely to necessary change along with a range of student pressures. Finally, there is a range of social pressures in universities that have an influence. These include a decline in the status of academic work, balancing work and family life, and managing difficult staff.

Middlehurst (2004) notes [using McNay's (1995) framework] how, given the combined impact of the external change forces outlined above, there has been a shift in the culture of UK universities from a collegium (something associated with freedom from external controls and academic autonomy) towards a culture that is both bureaucratic (a focus on regulation, consistency, due process and standard operating procedures) and corporate (exercise of power through executive authority and a separation of roles between managers and 'professionals'), with a greater overall focus on being an 'enterprise'. She concludes:

> An important missing element of the discussion is the part played by leaders, managers (and indeed governors) in making change happen and ensuring its sustainability. The people who carry these responsibilities, individually and collectively, have to address the structural and cultural inhibitors of change. Experience suggests that these inhibitors can include excessive hierarchy and over-heavy bureaucracy, the comfort of ingrained routines, strong vertical command structures and weak lateral and bottom-up communication, unbalanced and non-integrated authority across professional domains, conservatism and risk aversion, territoriality, defensiveness and insecurity as well as wilfulness ...
>
> Changing internal structures and roles may be a necessary but far from sufficient condition for achieving change in universities. Without also giving attention to the integration of structures with strategy and with systems and processes to guide, inform and reward, change messages and efforts will not be sustained. Nor will these messages reach the 'heartland' or enable the 'development periphery' to flourish ... (B)ecause universities are places where ideas and values are deeply integrated with structures, functions, roles and cultures, change processes must address the socio-emotional and symbolic aspects of institutional life as well as the instrumental aspects of the business. This represents an important agenda for those who have the task of leading change in universities.
>
> Middlehurst (2004: 277-278)

Middlehurst (2004: 260ff) also draws out some very important connections between the changed external operating environment now faced by universities and the need for new approaches to governance and leadership:

> The liberal Oxbridge ideal, forged in the second half of the nineteenth century, was concerned with the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, including the production and transmission of knowledge ... The model of internal governance that supported this position was one in which academic authority was supreme, expressed operationally in terms of management and decision-making through committees, with senior academics chairing the committees. The purpose of the committees was to achieve consensus ... Decision-making was essentially slow-moving ... (T)his form of governance was consistent with an academic culture that emphasised rationality and involvement in decision-making. There was also a degree of 'fit' with a relatively stable and supportive external environment.

As a senior academic at the national workshops on the current study noted:

> It is critical that we improve the design and operation of universities, given the constantly shifting operating context we now face. We have to make life less like 'tramping through bureaucratic mud'; we have to be less plodding, more agile, more action-focused with less talk, meetings, planning and reviews that change nothing in practice.

And as participants in a workshop on the study's results undertaken with senior staff at the University of Toronto observed:

> An academic culture is a difficult environment to work with in initiating and implementing change. Some will push consensus - something which can be a force for no change - whereas others will push academic independence and say 'I'm not obliged to get on the change bus'. As a leader this makes engaging university staff with required change a major challenge.

The Study's context scales and items

Table 5 brings together the 23 major influences identified above into five underpinning subscales.

Table 5 Context scales and items

Scale	Item
Social Pressures	Balancing work and family life
	Declining status of academic work
	Managing difficult staff
External Accountability	Greater government reporting and scrutiny
	Growing risk of litigation
	Increasing responsibility to external groups and agencies
Competitive Pressures	Decreased government funding
	Growing international competition
	Growing local competition
	Growing pressure to generate new income
	Increasing dependence on business and industry
	Rapid changes in technology
	Finding and retaining high-quality staff
Institutional Change Capacity	Clarifying strategic directions
	Handling unexpected events
	Maintaining a specific institutional image
	Managing pressures for continuous change
	Dealing with local university cultures
	Slow administrative processes
Student Pressures	Increased focus on filling enrolment targets
	Increased student complaints
	Increased student diversity
	Increasing student attrition rates

The relative impact of these influences on leaders work

In the study's online survey the 513 respondents were invited to rate the level of impact each of the influences itemised in Table 5 currently has on their daily work (1 low to 5 high). Figure 2 shows the mean scores for the key learning and teaching leadership roles studied. As would be expected, there is variation in the perceived forces that different leaders see as shaping their work.

Many comparisons can be made between these results. As a general rule, any pairwise difference greater than 0.5 can be considered 'statistically significant'. Differences greater than 0.3 can be considered to represent a small effect, differences greater than 0.6 a medium effect and 0.9 or greater a large effect.
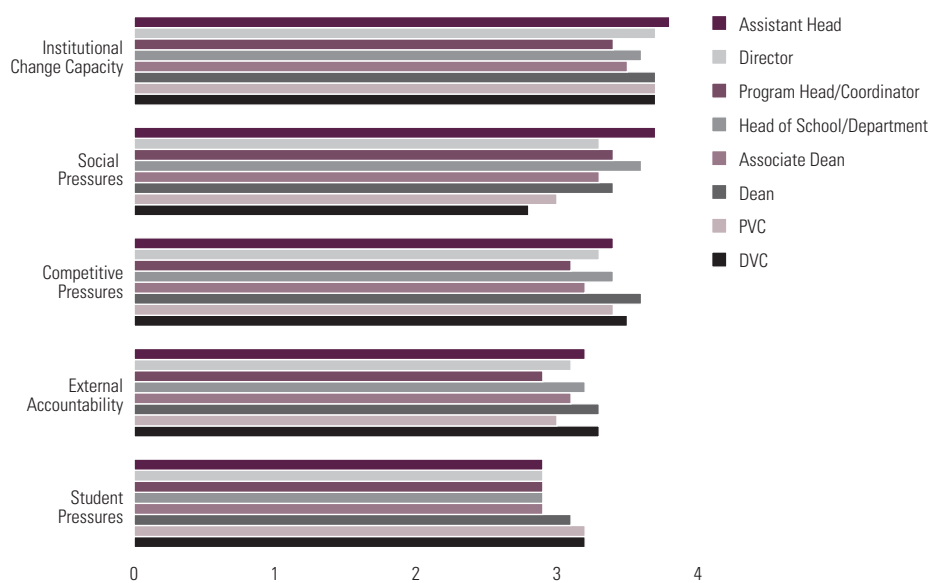
Figure 2 Context scale means by role

Figure 2 shows that leaders do see the factors in each context scale as having an influence on the delivery of their role. And in this regard the results are consistent with the literature just reviewed. However, the findings go further than much of what is reported in the literature on this topic. It is now possible to examine not only influences, but their perceived level of importance between roles. Such information can be used to inform the recruitment and the leadership support and development programs of universities.

Institutional change capacity and responsiveness emerge as being the most influential cluster of factors in shaping leadership. Of all the influences shaping academic leadership, for the 513 leaders in this study, it is clarifying strategic directions, managing continuous changes and dealing with slow administrative processes that they say most influence their daily work. This is true for the sample of leaders overall, and for all specific roles except Program Heads/Coordinators. This finding will be taken up in more detail in the next chapter when the extensive qualitative data on the challenges and satisfactions of different roles are explored.

The social pressures scale focuses on the extent to which academic leaders have to juggle competing work, personal and professional influences. This received the highest mean scores averaged across all roles. By role, Assistant Heads of School and Heads of School/Department provided the highest

ratings, while DVCs and PVCs provided the lowest. The range of variation is marked. This confirms that leadership, like learning, is a profoundly social experience and has direct links to the results on the capabilities that count for effective academic leadership discussed in Chapter Four, in particular the ability to work constructively and responsively with a diverse range of staff and to set priorities.

The influence of competitive pressures is rated highest by Deans, DVCs, PVCs and School or Department Heads, as are the ratings for dealing with external accountabilities. These are the factors associated with working with external forces, and being responsive to and dependent on external groups.

In terms of the perceived influence of student pressures, the highest ratings are given by DVCs, PVCs and Deans. This is understandable, given that the items on student pressures focus on aspects of student life with institution-wide relevance and are concerned with managing quality and dealing with complaints, along with assuring income and academic standards.

The results show similar patterns in perceptions of the relative importance of influences between the roles within each scale. On average across the five scales, for instance, Deans and Assistant Heads tended to provide the highest ratings, whereas Academic Support staff and Informal leaders the lowest.

The perceived impact of specific influences/change forces for each role is presented in Table 6. This shows the patterns within and across roles in more detail; however, it can also magnify small differences. Care should be taken in interpreting these figures as the number of respondents per role is fairly low, the items have low reliability as they are only single indicators, and the differences between the scores tend to be small.

Having said this, the results do show that DVCs, for instance, see finding and retaining high-quality staff, clarifying strategic directions and managing pressures for continuous change as the top three influences on their work. By contrast, as a group, they assign less importance to managing difficult staff, perceptions of the declining status of academic work, or increasing student attrition rates.

Heads of School/Department, by contrast, assign most importance to decreased government funding, growing pressure to generate new income, and balancing work and family life. They gave their lowest rankings to growing international competition, growing risk of litigation and increased student complaints.

Table 6 suggests that the requirements of one's role and the indicators used to judge effective performance of it will influence the relative importance of the different 'change pressures' identified. This is something that will be demonstrated in more detail in the following chapter.

Table 6 Importance ranking of specific influences by leadership role

	DVC	PVC	Dean	Assoc/ Asst't/ Dean	Head of School/ Dept	Program Head/ Coor-dinator	Director	Assoc/ Asst't Head
Balancing work and family life	16	9	11	2	3	2	2	3
Managing pressures for continuous change	3	8	2	1	4	3	1	1
Decreased government funding	4	3	1	3	1	1	10	3
Finding and retaining high-quality staff	1	1	4	7	6	6	6	5
Slow administrative processes	10	9	12	11	5	4	8	1
Clarifying strategic directions	2	3	6	5	8	11	4	9
Growing pressure to generate new income	16	2	3	12	2	7	12	6
Greater government reporting and scrutiny	5	9	7	4	7	10	11	7
Handling unexpected events	15	15	8	6	10	5	7	8
Rapid changes in technology	14	13	13	8	16	8	3	14
Dealing with local university cultures	10	5	16	9	12	9	9	12
Maintaining a specific institutional image	5	6	9	14	13	14	5	13
Managing difficult staff	20	18	5	13	9	13	16	9
Increased student diversity	9	9	17	10	18	16	12	16
Increased focus on filling enrolment targets	5	6	14	17	11	15	23	14
Increasing responsibility to external groups and agencies	10	13	10	15	14	18	14	16
Declining status of academic work	22	20	22	21	15	12	18	11
Growing local competition	5	19	15	16	17	19	15	16
Increasing student attrition rates	22	15	20	19	20	17	19	19
Increasing dependence on business and industry	16	15	18	20	19	21	21	19
Growing international competition	10	21	19	18	21	23	17	22
Growing risk of litigation	20	22	23	22	22	20	22	21
Increased student complaints	19	23	20	23	23	22	20	23

When the results for different roles in Table 6 are combined, the top ranking influences across all roles are (in order):

- Balancing work and family life
- Managing continuous change
- Decreased government funding
- Finding high-quality staff
- Slow administrative processes
- Growing pressure to generate new income
- Clarifying strategic directions
- Government scrutiny and reporting
- Handling unexpected events.

The data in Table 6 attracted considerable interest at the national and international workshops on the findings.

For example, participants noted the significant difference in the importance ratings for work-family balance allocated by DVCs, PVCs and Deans on the one hand and those in less senior and more line leadership positions on the other. A range of hypotheses were put forward to explain this. They included the fact that people in more senior positions may have adult children who have already left home and have more time available; that they have support staff to which some tasks can be delegated; or they may have worked out the balance and it is no longer an issue.

One national feedback group noted that the impact of employers was missing from the list of influences canvassed.

It is interesting to compare the above results with the 2007 data from interviews with 50 North American higher education leaders (a combination of Chancellors, Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Provosts and CIOs) undertaken by Segall and Freedman (2007). The key challenges identified by these academic leaders in that study were:

Optimising Student Engagement

This includes enabling academic achievement and providing high-quality student services. It includes the student lifecycle, from choosing and preparing for higher education to student life services, remediation, retention, time to graduation and alumni relations.

Institutional Accountability

This includes being accountable to trustees, state funding entities, legislatures, accrediting bodies. It involves effectively gathering evidence and measuring student learning outcomes, evaluating financial performance, and gauging progress toward meeting institutional strategic goals and objectives.

Revenue Generation

This entails increasing non-tuition, tuition and state funding sources, primarily through better management of student services, increased development and marketing of distance education courses, and entrepreneurial activities that leverage research and community-development activities. Revenue generation also includes seeking increased research funding and philanthropic support.

Globalisation

This involves developing and enhancing an institution's international efforts through initiatives that establish new global partnerships, helping institutions compete more effectively in the global arena, improving international student recruitment, increasing students' knowledge of global issues and boosting study-abroad programs.

Segall, P. and Freedman, G. (2007: p. 4)

There is considerable alignment between the findings of the present study and those from the *Campus Review* (2006: 3) survey of 124 senior academics from 35 Australian universities on the areas of greatest concern to the respondents:

Staff

'Recruiting and retaining quality staff' was of very high concern; 'Quality of staff' and 'low academic salaries' were of moderate to high concern.

Students

'Quality of teaching and learning' was of high concern; moderate to high concern was expressed about 'teaching ratios', 'student retention', 'student numbers & load - domestic and international' and 'ability to meet enrolment targets'.

Finances

'Government funding' was the issue of most concern with more than 88% of respondents rating it as high to very high, followed by 'research income' with 65% of respondents marking it of high or very high concern.

Government regulation

'Government regulation and red tape' was of very high concern.

Legal Issues

'Industrial relations' and 'litigation' were of moderate concern.

The above comparisons should only be taken as indicative as each study had a different methodology and focus.

Summary

Whereas Chapter One established a conceptual framework for studying academic leadership and change management, in Chapter Two the exact nature of the 'change forces' with which our academic leaders have to contend has been laid out.

But how are our academic leaders experiencing these 'change forces'? What are they focusing on most in their different roles? And how do they judge their own performance in delivering them?

It is to these questions that we now turn.

03

Experiencing Leadership in Higher Education

Chapter Three shifts focus onto how our higher education leaders are responding to the change pressures, influences, and challenges of the external and local contexts identified in Chapter Two. This is consistent with the central reason for undertaking the study: the repeated finding in the literature and in our work with universities over the past two decades that change doesn't just happen but must be led (see, for example, Osseo-Assare et al. 2005).

This chapter first identifies the insider's experience of leading in such a context, using the analogies provided by the 513 leaders to describe what their daily world is like. Then the leaders identify the major areas of daily focus in each role; along with their major work satisfactions and challenges. Finally, the indicators they use to judge they are delivering their role effectively are discussed. The analyses identify some important areas of misalignment between titles, roles, performance management and position descriptions on the one hand and the daily realities of each university leadership role on the other.

The insider's perspective on the daily realities of higher education leadership

In the online survey respondents were invited to develop and explain an analogy that best described what it was like to be in their current academic leadership role. These provide important insights into what it is like to be a leader in the continuously shifting context of higher education and having to deal with the key influences and change forces identified in Chapter Two. The most common analogies are listed in Table 7.

Table 7 Academic leaders' analogies

▮ Herding cats	▮ Being a small fish in a large cloudy pond
▮ Getting butterflies to fly in formation	▮ Being a salmon trying to swim upstream
▮ Juggling	▮ Rowing without an oar
▮ Being a gardener	▮ Sailing a leaky ship - faulty bilge pump
▮ Conducting of an orchestra/directing a play	▮ Being the meat in the sandwich
▮ Keeping a flotilla heading in the same direction	▮ Wading through a quagmire of bureaucracy
▮ Being the captain of a sailing ship	▮ Pushing a pea uphill with my nose
▮ Coaching a successful sporting team	▮ Riding a bicycle on a tightrope
▮ Climbing a mountain together	▮ Having a Ferrari with no money for fuel
▮ Plumbing a building - essential but no one sees it	▮ Being a one-armed paper hanger working in a gale
▮ Being a diplomat	▮ Trying to nail jelly to the ceiling whilst trying to put out spot fires with my feet
▮ Wearing multiple hats at the same time	▮ Trying to drive a nail into a wall of blanc-mange - little resistance but no result
▮ Being the older sibling in a large family	
▮ Working with a dysfunctional family	▮ Being in groundhog day
▮ Being the minister of a church where only the converted come	▮ Living in a medieval castle
▮ Voting Labor in a safe Liberal seat	▮ Being a Rubik's cube
▮ Matchmaking	▮ Being in an Escher painting
▮ Bartending	

These analogies all indicate that the role of academic leader requires one to be able to negotiate not only the external forces but also the local ones identified in Chapter Two; that leading is a complex, constantly changing, relatively uncertain and highly human endeavour; that not everything can be pre-planned or can be expected to turn out in the way intended; that leadership is a team not a solo effort; that culture ('the way we do things around here') counts—that, for example, leadership can be frustrated by overly bureaucratic and unresponsive systems or by being confronted with passive resistance; that, as the orchestra conductor analogy suggests, successful learning and teaching programs require both a sound plan (score) and the people with the skills and ability to work productively together to deliver it (a talented orchestra able to work together in a harmonious and complementary way).

The most popular analogies were 'herding cats' and 'juggling'. These highlight the challenges of working with diversity and with the different 'tribes' that make up the modern university.

When the analogies are analysed by role it becomes clear that one's sense of 'efficacy' (control) shapes the type of analogy selected. Analogies that indicate more control (e.g. being an orchestra conductor, gardener) tend to be identified by the more senior leaders (DVCs, Executive Deans, PVCs).

Line managers, like the local Heads of Program, tend to opt for analogies that indicate they have less capacity to influence or are unclear on the 'big picture'.

Typical analogies for this group are 'being a one-armed paper hanger in a gale'; 'being a small fish in a big cloudy pond'; 'being a pebble in a shoe'; 'pushing a pea up hill with my nose'; 'being an island in a sea of administrivia'; 'wading through a quagmire of bureaucracy; 'being the sole parent of a group of adolescents'; 'climbing a mountain with a team'; 'dancing on hot coals'; 'flying a full plane without ground support'; or 'shielding a candle against the wind'. It is to these people, said the national workshop participants, that greater attention needs to be given as key changes are being formulated and implemented—because it is local leaders, like Heads of Program, who are the final arbiters over whether any desired change in learning and teaching is taken up and translated into daily practice by line staff.

Leaders whose role is to manage both up and down (e.g. Heads of School) tended to opt for analogies like 'being the meat in the sandwich'; 'running a balancing act – having to keep budget, staff, students, industry requirements, research and senior management in some sort of balance'; 'being a mother – always at someone's beck and call'; 'being the captain of a small ship in stormy weather' or 'being a spider building a web'. Some, like the Ferrari analogy, pick up on the challenges associated with the funding issues identified in Chapter Two.

Those who have to lead through influence – like Directors of Learning and Teaching – give preference to analogies like 'being a minister in a church to which only the converted come'. Associate Deans prefer analogies like 'being a matchmaker'; 'herding cats'; 'juggling egos'; 'trying to drive a nail into a wall of blancmange' or 'voting Labor in a safe Liberal seat'.

The analogies in Table 7 were discussed in detail at the national and international workshops. The above observations were confirmed and additional ones like the following were made:

■ The local environment needs to be as efficient and focused as possible—that is, administrative processes need to be sharp, responsive and to demonstrably add value; there needs to be minimal duplication of effort; meetings need to be well run and focused on action and outcomes of clear benefit to students. In short, people need 'room to lead'. As participants at one of the workshops noted:

> 'Wading through bureaucratic mud' indicates the importance of sorting out the environment not just the people. Excessive bureaucracy and overly hierarchical approval processes indicate a lack of trust and an inability to sort out what really is of high risk and needs to be signed off at a number of levels and what can be made a local accountability. Responsiveness is key in the current environment and attending endless meetings or filling out templates without 'value add' is of no help.

■ The way those local people who will actually implement a desired change and quality improvement in learning and teaching are involved needs considerable enhancement.

■ There is a sense in the vast majority of analogies of people persevering, with moral purpose, in spite of all the frustrations.

■ Analogies like 'being in groundhog day' suggest the need for a more focused and clearly shared vision for where everyone is to head.

■ The 'one-armed paper hanger' and the 'jelly' and 'blancmange' analogies raised a critical issue for participants at the study's workshops—how best to deal with a 'change averse' culture. These analogies, said participants, identify a unique challenge for leaders trying to engage university staff in necessary change—how to work with what a number called disengagement, white-anting and passive resistance.

■ Analogies like 'having to wear multiple hats' pick up on the need for clearer role focus.

■ At one workshop it was noted that it is possible to see three ways in which the analogies vary: by role complexity and authority, by clarity of role, and by the level of resources available to the individual.

■ Whilst the 'herding cats' and 'juggling' analogies are common to both genders there are some differences. For example, females tend to refer more often to being a conductor of an orchestra, a gardener, and working as part of a family, group or team; whereas analogies that are more common to male respondents include driving cars, greasing the cogs of a machine, being an engineer, building houses or roads, and being a CEO, manager, school principal or commander.

What academic leaders do

Respondents to the online survey were asked to rate the relative importance of a wide range of activities in the delivery of their particular portfolio. These activities and areas of focus were identified from the literature review and an analysis of position descriptions.

Table 8 clusters the 25 activities identified into five major work focus scales. This provides an overview of the work of academic leaders and the analysis that follows shows the variation in focus and complexity for each activity/focus area by role.

Table 8 Leadership work focus scales and items

Scale	Item
Academic Activities	Delivering presentations
	Developing learning programs
	Reviewing teaching activities
	Scholarly research
	Working on student matters
	Your own professional development
	Institutional research
Networking	Liaising with external constituencies
	Marketing activities
	Networking within the University
Management and Administration	Budget management
	Chairing meetings
	Dealing with complaints
	Dealing with complaints
	Participating in meetings
	Preparing reports
	Responding to ad hoc requests
Planning and Policy Development	Developing organisational processes
	Developing policy
	Identifying new opportunities
	Strategic planning
Managing Staff	Managing other staff
	Managing relationships with senior staff
	Reviewing people's performance
	Staff development

These work focus scales generally align with Ramsden's (1998: 125) four domains of academic leadership: academic people, academic management, academic work and academic leadership. Like Ramsden, we see activity in each area as interacting with the others.

The leadership focus areas in Table 8 align also with an overview of university activities and their interconnection presented in a keynote address to the Australian Universities Quality Forum in 2004 (Scott, 2004). The framework discussed proposed that effective universities, like effective leaders, explicitly link and ensure alignment between: (a) the core university activities of Learning and Teaching, Research and Engagement; (b) their support, resourcing, administration, and management services; and (c) key strategic directions and governance. It was proposed that, if the quality and alignment of (a), (b) and (c) is sound, then performance on key outcomes and impact indicators

like student demand, retention, employability, research productivity and community improvement will be high. Purposeful leadership, evidence-based networking and clear, complementary role definition that is action focused (Fullan, 2008) was seen in that model to be the 'glue' that links the various activities.

Figure 3 below summarises the relative importance given by our 513 leaders to each of the five work-focus scales, sorted by role. As anticipated, this figure shows that there is variation both within the roles and across the scales.

Planning and policy development, along with managing staff, form a large part of people's reported work focus in all the roles surveyed. While Program Heads and Coordinators provided the lowest mean ratings in terms of planning and policy development, Deans provided the highest. Heads, Deans and DVCs provided the highest ratings in terms of staff management. Assistant Heads and Program Heads/Coordinators report spending most of their time on academic activities, and place considerably more emphasis on such work than do central senior executives.
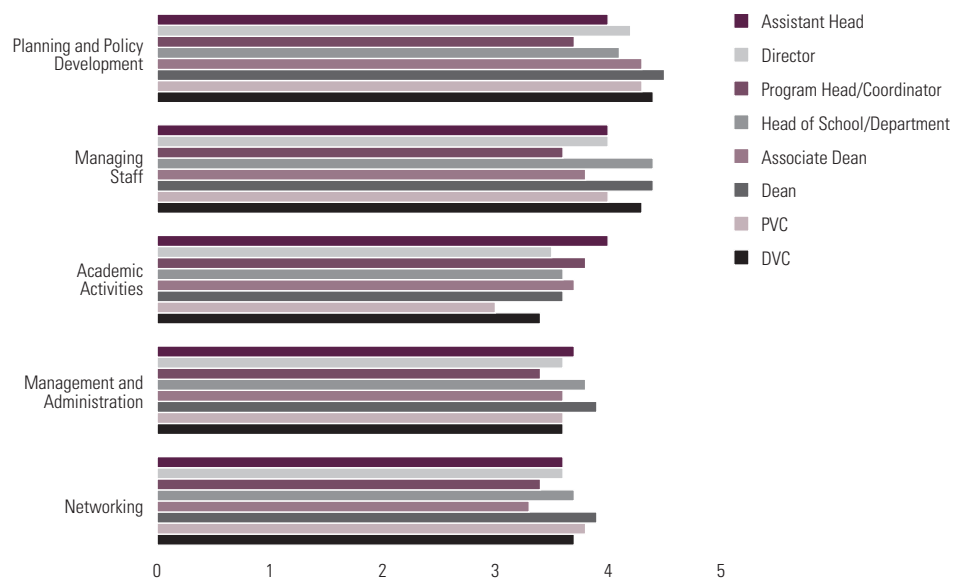
Figure 3 Leaders' reported work focus

Reviewing scale scores (Figure 3) helps form a general view of the patterns of leaders' work. Reviewing specific items (Table 9) helps elaborate this in detail. Table 9 ranks the 25 items that underpin the five scales for a selected number of roles. As noted earlier, care should be taken in interpreting these figures as the number of respondents per role is fairly low, the items have low reliability as they are only single indicators, and the differences between the scores tend to be small. The most value may be obtained from these results by looking at the highest and lowest rank scores for each role.

Table 9 Areas of work focus ranked by importance

	DVC	PVC	Dean	Assoc/ Asst't/ Dean	Head of School/ Dept	Program Head/ Coord	Director	Assoc/ Asst't Head
Managing relationships with senior staff	1	1	1	7	2	7	1	12
Identifying new opportunities	4	3	3	9	3	4	3	5
Managing other staff	7	4	4	12	1	5	7	1
Strategic planning	3	2	2	1	4	10	4	9
Reviewing teaching activities	21	14	13	3	10	3	12	2
Participating in meetings	12	10	7	4	8	6	5	4
Staff development	12	16	14	13	6	13	8	12
Developing policy	2	10	5	2	9	15	2	10
Working on student matters	14	23	16	6	15	1	19	8
Developing learning programs	18	20	19	10	18	2	15	7
Networking within the University	4	7	7	11	17	16	6	17
Scholarly research	25	24	23	17	14	8	18	3
Developing organisational processes	7	4	10	5	16	19	10	15
Your own professional development	21	24	19	18	20	11	14	5
Chairing meetings	7	4	6	8	13	21	11	19
Responding to ad hoc requests	18	22	17	15	22	9	16	10
Delivering presentations	7	14	18	20	21	12	12	16
Liaising with external constituencies	4	9	8	19	12	18	17	19
Dealing with complaints	17	18	15	16	11	14	22	14
Preparing reports	14	12	21	14	24	20	9	21
Reviewing peoples performance	7	13	11	22	7	24	20	17
General administration	18	20	24	21	19	17	21	22
Budget management	23	8	12	25	5	25	23	23
Marketing activities	24	18	25	24	23	22	24	24
Institutional research	16	17	21	23	25	23	25	25

Table 9 shows, for instance, that DVCs provided the lowest mean importance ratings for scholarly research, marketing activities and budget management. The highest mean scores, by contrast, were given to items about strategic planning, developing policy and managing relationships with senior staff.

Most roles allocate relatively high importance to identifying new opportunities and, with the exception of Assistant Heads, managing staff. Similarly strategic planning is important in the majority of roles with the exception of Program Head/Coordinator. Reviewing teaching activities is the particular focus of Associate Deans, Program Heads and Assistant Heads.

Meetings attract comparatively high work-focus ratings across all roles, with the qualitative data indicating that many meetings are not seen as being productive or cost-efficient. Staff development and reviewing people's performance appear to be of greatest importance for the Heads of School. Budget management is also of much higher importance to Heads of School than all other roles, with the exception of PVCs.

Heads of Program give much higher priority to developing learning programs than all other roles and, predictably, give top importance to working on student matters and reviewing teaching activities.

This links to the key motivators for leaders in other roles and raises interesting implications for the performance indicators currently given emphasis in such roles.

Networking is of higher importance to the more senior learning and teaching leaders, along with Directors of Learning and Teaching.

One's own professional development attracts relatively low importance ratings across the majority of roles, with the exception of Assistant Heads.

Liaising with external constituencies is of higher importance to the more senior learning and teaching leadership roles.

The data in Table 9 attracted particular interest at the national and international workshops. The table was seen as providing a very useful way to get a quick overview of the nature and relative focus of the many central, university-wide and local leadership roles concerned with learning and teaching. It would also help universities get a sharper picture of how to make the roles more directly complement each other.

Below are the recurring observations made on the data in Table 9 at these workshops:

■ This table shows clearly that elements of being both a manager (e.g. budgeting, managing staff, chairing meetings, dealing with complaints) and being a leader (strategic planning, developing learning programs, identifying new opportunities) are important in most of the roles studied. There are some interesting observations to be made about the balance between leadership and management in the importance ratings for each role.

■ What is emphasised here can be compared with the later results on the capabilities that count and key effectiveness indicators leaders use to judge their own performance; there are also links to the influences/change forces leaders identified they were experiencing in Chapter Two.

■ The roles of Associate Dean, Head of Program and Director have less direct authority or control over resources than roles like Head of School or Dean; and, because of this, such people need to be particularly deft at 'leading through influence'.

■ The DVC, PVC and Director of Learning and Teaching roles have a pan-university focus, whereas most of the others are located in a particular unit or funding area; this, said participants, often creates tension as the pan-university roles seek to get disparate areas of the university to work together, whereas particular schools or faculties prefer to focus on their own 'patch' and budget interests. As one senior workshop participant observed:

> Some roles – like Head of School – can become very 'baronial' and focused on their 'bottom line' because this is the way universities and their funding models are structured—funding is typically given to local units not to trans-university initiatives; this makes the job of people like PVCs who have a pan-university focus tricky.

In their study of the changing role of the PVC, Smith et al. (2007: 5) came to a similar conclusion when discussing the critical importance of the PVC role:

> PVCs have progressively increased in abundance since 1960, not because of management directives but because the more complex challenges faced by academic institutions have increased the need for individuals who weave and maintain a complex web which enables the institution, as the sum of its constituent parts, to function. We argue that such is the centrality of PVC roles to the working of the dual structures of academic work and management, that if the pro-vice-chancellorship did not already exist, it would need to be invented.

▪ The roles of DVC, Dean and Head of School were confirmed as having to cover all aspects of academic work not just learning and teaching.

▪ The role of Head of School was again singled out as being the one which is often the hardest, as these people are directly responsible for 'bottom line' areas like load, budget and staff performance but must, at the same time, manage both up and down—thus the analogy most favoured by Heads of School being 'the meat in the sandwich'.

This aligns with the conclusion of Jones and Holdaway (1996) that the Head of School/ Department role is especially challenging and Wolverton's (1997) findings that it is 'academically schizophrenic'; that it tends to be a role which people come in and out of whilst their research is kept 'on hold' (Jones, 1996); that it is both the 'glue' and 'the meat in the sandwich' and that it is the final port of call for 'people problems'. Gmelch (2000) also identifies the non-linear nature of the role with the finding that 65% of US Department Chairs had returned to faculty status after a period serving as an administrator.

As Jones (1996) concludes:

> The trend towards term appointments of three to five years for post-secondary administrators has meant that department heads want to ensure that they maintain their instructional (and research) skills and knowledge current for the time when they relinquish their administrative responsibilities. This emphasis on an 'in-and-out' approach to administrative appointments has led to increased ambiguity and difficulties in ascertaining how academic leadership should be exercised during career moves from colleague to department head and back to colleague again.

▪ It was noted how important the leadership of the Head of Program is in making sure a desired change actually happens in local practice—participants emphasised again that, if such people fail to engage with a change, they will not work with local staff to translate it into action. The development of Heads of Program networks and their more consistent involvement in helping shape the process of L&T change was recommended.

▪ Newer role titles (e.g. PVC Learning and Teaching; A/Dean) were identified as creating some confusion and an expanded use of more traditional titles like Dean was also noted. Deans were identified as being the equivalent to Head of School in some universities but being almost a 'mini Vice-Chancellor' in others where an Executive Dean can run a college of more than 10,000 students.

▪ The extent to which what people say is important and what they actually do on a daily level requires further testing and exploration.

- Participants at a number of the workshops wondered why professional development was ranked relatively low for most roles. This, said participants, has some interesting links to the findings about respondents' current experiences with leadership development programs (Chapter Five).

Some aspects of learning and teaching leaders' work concentrate on the core purposes of creating and delivering learning programs. Many, however, are more indirect. And some of these explain leadership analogies like 'wading through bureaucratic mud'.

Unclear role definition and linkages

> Official descriptors and categories available to describe professional managers in higher education are inadequate, and a review of these is, therefore, timely. Understandings of the roles of professional managers are unclear, particularly those outside the traditional 'specialist' and 'generalist' categories.
>
> Whitchurch (2006: 19)
>
> … the role of PVC (in the UK) remains under-theorised and has rarely formed a topic for empirical study.
>
> Smith, D. & Adams, J. (2006)

As noted earlier, role confusion surrounding leadership titles was evident as we set about determining the sample for the study and in the literature review. As the study unfolded it also became clear that direct attention to formulating a set of more clearly defined, complementary and distributed leadership roles for learning and teaching was necessary. This was confirmed at the study's national and international workshops.

The following comments from the qualitative data generated by the online survey are typical:

> This is the first time I've worked at a Dean's level and find there is almost no connection between what the Dean has to do and what the staff teaching have to do. The Dean has to deal with many external and university pressures and the staff often just focus in on doing an excellent job in their classes within their discipline. To them the discipline is more important than the university. By trying to impose a university focus on academic work the Dean is often seen as hindering real work.
>
> (Dean, female, 46-55)
>
> The (Associate Dean) role is ill defined, and it does not fall naturally within the department/school/faculty hierarchy. Whilst this gives me the freedom to make of it what I wish it also makes it difficult or uncomfortable to implement policy. When your role is not clearly defined within the structure, there is a fine line between implementing and interfering.
>
> (Associate Dean, female, 46-55)

It also became clear that a 'PVC' at one institution may be in the same role as an 'Executive Dean' at another. Similarly a 'Head of School' in an institution with a college structure could have similar accountabilities to a Faculty Dean at another.

This has implications, amongst other things, for the mobility and promotion of leaders from one role to another. Clear, complementary roles are also important for effective change design and implementation and accountability systems.

In the present study we were careful to make sure that it was the activities delivered that aligned with the title used when between-role comparisons were made.

Most satisfying and most challenging aspects of being a learning and teaching leader in the current context

Respondents to the online survey were invited to write down what were the most satisfying and challenging/unsatisfying aspects of their particular role as a higher education leader. The results are presented in Tables 10 and 11.

The results can be compared with the quantitative results on role focus discussed above.

Both Table 10 and Table 11 have direct implications for reviewing and giving greater focus to the position descriptions for different roles and making sure that they both complement each other and focus on what is most productive. This process can be further developed by ensuring that the performance criteria take into account the effectiveness indicators identified for each role later in this chapter and that person descriptions focus on the capabilities that count, which are identified in the following chapter.

Table 10 Most satisfying aspects of current role

DVC/PVC Setting strategy & direction Making team-based change happen Interacting with clever, motivated staff	**Head of School/Department** Setting direction for the school Being able to make things happen Assisting staff and managing resources
Dean Developing a productive group of leaders Helping staff achieve goals Strategy formation & implementing efficient systems	**Head of Program** Assisting students and teaching Implementing a new curriculum Building staff morale & skills
A/Dean Working across uni to make key L&T improvements happen Policy & strategy development Identifying problems & opportunities and addressing them	**Director of Learning & Teaching** Achieving teaching improvements Developing new approaches to learning and teaching Having an influence on L&T policy and strategy

Table 11 Most challenging/least satisfying aspects of current role

DVC/PVC
Archaic processes & endless travel/ meetings that have no outcome
Organisational indecisiveness
Performance management of staff & change averse cultures

Dean
Educating bureaucrats/handling administrivia
Excessive number of ritualised meetings
Managing resource cuts & staff performance
Having to lead through influence

A/Dean
Dealing with difficult staff & inertia
Fuzziness of the role: influence compared with line supervision
Finding room to 'lead' - meetings, administration, reporting, changing directions
Managing restructures

Head of School/Department
Processes, ad hoc requests & meetings that don't demonstrably improve core outcomes
Lack of rewards/praise for success
Managing complaints, staff performance and budget constraints

Head of Program
Dysfunctional systems & administration that don't add value to student learning
Dealing with difficult staff & inertia
Managing complaints

Director of Learning & Teaching
Endless paperwork & proposal writing
Unproductive meetings with no agenda or outcome
Engaging uninterested staff
Promoting the equal status of L&T vs. research

The challenges identified in Table 11 indicate that, in trying to respond to the change forces outlined in Chapter Two and the influences given priority by respondents in Table 6 of that chapter, the learning and teaching leaders in this study find that they have 'little room to lead'—that time-consuming and unproductive meetings, dysfunctional systems, unnecessary bureaucracy, excessive reporting with no outcome, a culture and focus on talk, planning and review more than action, are getting in the way of the areas of work focus identified in Table 8 and the productive areas of work identified in Table 10.

As one Head of School observed:

> Each day I have to deal with a constant stream of trivial distractions that others seem to think (are) important.
>
> (male, 46-55)

People in more local roles express a concern for recognition of both their work and their ideas with the following comment being typical:

> The lack of reward or recognition for success and the unwillingness of senior management to engage with coalface staff in decision-making. The lack of 'emotional intelligence' in some of my colleagues and leaders who believe the autocratic style of leadership will get results.
>
> (HOD, male, 46-55)

This is consistent with the sorts of analogies identified for each of the roles in Table 7.

It is to the links between these findings and the effectiveness criteria the learning and teaching leaders use to judge they are performing their role successfully that we now turn.

How academic leaders judge their effectiveness

> Reduced to its essentials, the measure of an effective academic leader … has two elements. Can he or she enable average people to do excellent things? Can he or she help these people address change enthusiastically and energetically?
>
> Ramsden (1998: 110)

Bryman (2007), in a review of the higher education literature on leadership in the UK, US and Australia, notes that little research in higher education is concerned with the issue of effectiveness in leadership. Earlier studies of effective leaders in school education, a review of the limited literature on leadership effectiveness in higher education, benchmarking with overseas higher education leadership groups, and an analysis of existing position descriptions and input from the project's National Steering Committee, identified 25 key indicators, each phrased as a specific form of achievement or outcome.

These indicators were clustered into five discrete leadership effectiveness scales (Table 12). They focus more on indicators concerning positive implementation and impact than on indicators concerned with the quality of inputs like plans produced, reviews held, and resources allocated, which are seen as being necessary but not sufficient to indicate effective performance as an academic leader.

Table 12 Leadership effectiveness criteria scales and items

Scale	Item
Personal and Interpersonal Outcomes	Achieving goals set for your own professional development
	Establishing a collegial working environment
	Formative involvement of external stakeholders in your work
	Having high levels of staff support
	Producing future learning and teaching leaders
Learning and Teaching Outcomes	Achieving high-quality graduate outcomes
	Enhanced representation of equity groups
	Improving student satisfaction ratings for learning and teaching
	Increased student retention rates
	Producing significant improvements in learning and teaching quality
	Winning learning and teaching awards and prizes
Recognition and Reputation	Achieving a high profile for your area of responsibility
	Achieving positive outcomes from external reviews of the area
	Being invited to present to key groups on learning and teaching
	Publishing refereed papers and reports on learning and teaching
	Receiving positive user feedback for your area of responsibility
Financial Performance	Achieving a positive financial outcome for your area of responsibility
	Meeting student load targets
	Securing competitive funds related to learning and teaching
	Winning resources for your area of responsibility
Effective Implementation	Bringing innovative policies and practices into action
	Delivering agreed tasks or projects on time and to specification
	Delivering successful team projects in learning and teaching
	Producing successful learning systems or infrastructures
	Successful implementation of new initiatives

In the study's online survey respondents were asked to rate this set of performance indicators first on importance as an indicator for judging effectiveness in their particular role and second on the extent to which improving performance on that criterion was an improvement priority for them (1 – low to 5 – high).

The results on importance are summarised in Figure 4. They are shown by role and for each of the five scales listed in Table 12.

Overall, being able to implement initiatives effectively is clearly seen as being the most important indicator of effective leadership for this sample of 513 academic leaders. This scale focuses on bringing innovative policies and practices into action on time and to specification, and leading successful team projects. Broadly conceived, these are outcomes about the capacity to implement change in universities. There are links here to the activities identified in Table 8 as most important, including planning and the range of activities concerned with interacting with and managing staff activities.

Variation amongst roles is greatest in terms of financial performance indicators. Here, PVCs, Deans and Heads provided higher ratings than leaders in more local roles. Responses from leaders in different roles were much more homogeneous in terms of effective implementation, and achieving enhanced recognition or reputation, learning and teaching outcomes, and personal and interpersonal outcomes.
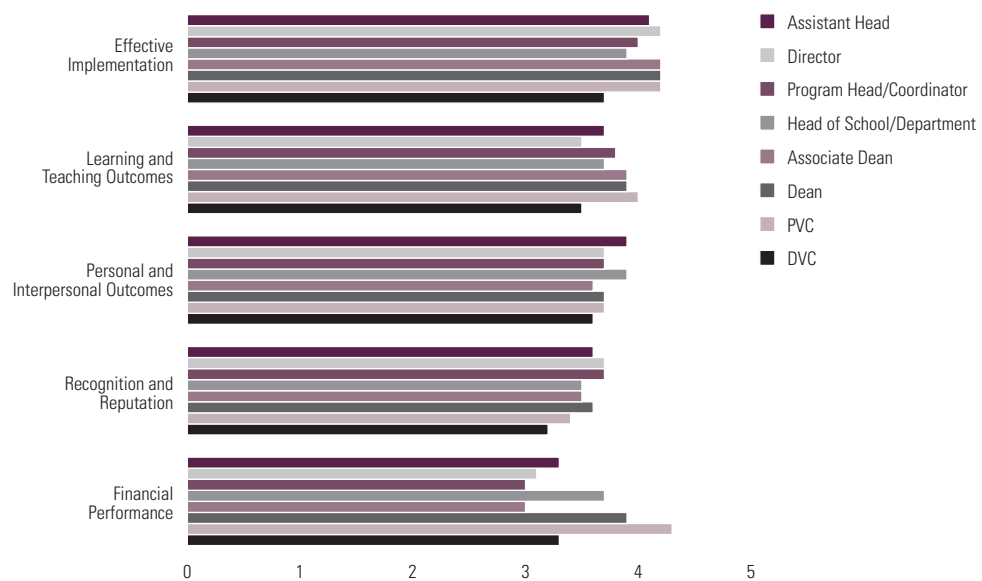
Figure 4 Leaders' perceptions of determinants of effective performance

Table 13 below shows the markers of effectiveness in rank order for each of the key academic leadership roles investigated. The results help map out the aspirations of academic leaders in different roles and provide an important 'insider' perspective of how effective performance in each role might be judged.

It was uniformly recommended at the national and international workshops that current performance criteria for each role be reviewed for validity against these findings. They align well with the emerging national focus on judging learning and teaching quality and productivity more on the value of the outcomes than inputs. National workshop participants noted that the highest rating items reflect the

growing urgency in the sector not to just talk about or plan necessary change (an input) but to make it happen—consistently, effectively and sustainably (an outcome).

As one national workshop participant concluded:

> … we all accept that constant change is now the reality and these findings simply reflect what universities have to do to continuously adapt to an ever-changing context.

Table 13 Determinants of effective performance ranked by importance

	DVC	PVC	Dean	Assoc Dean	Head of School/ Dept	Program Head/ Coord	Director
Achieving high-quality graduate outcomes	5	3	1	2	2	1	9
Successful implementation of new initiatives	1	1	3	3	3	7	1
Producing significant improvements in learning and teaching quality	9	3	5	1	5	3	5
Establishing a collegial working environment	5	3	4	8	1	8	7
Delivering agreed tasks or projects on time and to specification	3	9	5	5	8	5	3
Bringing innovative policies and practices into action	2	8	7	6	13	4	2
Improving student satisfaction ratings for learning and teaching	8	3	8	4	7	6	15
Receiving positive user feedback for your area of responsibility	13	16	13	10	11	2	4
Achieving positive outcomes from external reviews of the area	5	13	2	9	9	9	6
Achieving a high profile for your area of responsibility	9	9	9	13	12	9	10
Having high levels of staff support	3	16	16	12	6	14	8
Delivering successful team projects in learning and teaching	24	19	15	11	16	12	11
Producing successful learning systems or infrastructures	23	12	14	7	18	11	13
Winning resources for your area of responsibility	19	9	11	16	10	16	12
Producing future learning and teaching leaders	16	15	18	14	14	17	14
Increased student retention rates	16	12	17	15	19	15	20
Achieving goals set for your own professional development	15	23	22	20	21	13	21
Achieving a positive financial outcome for your area of responsibility	13	1	10	25	4	23	17
Formative involvement of external stakeholders in your work	16	16	20	18	15	20	16
Enhanced representation of equity groups	9	21	18	17	20	18	19
Meeting student load targets	12	3	12	21	17	24	25
Being invited to present to key groups on learning and teaching	19	24	23	22	25	21	18
Publishing refereed papers and reports on learning and teaching	25	25	25	23	23	19	23
Winning learning and teaching awards and prizes	22	22	24	19	24	22	22
Securing competitive funds related to learning and teaching	19	19	21	24	22	25	24

Workshop participants noted that achieving positive economic outcomes was ranked in the top four as an effective performance indicator for just two roles: PVC and Head of School/Department. This was interpreted by the workshop participants as indicating that although learning and teaching leaders may be well aware of the 'bottom line' they still give priority to educational benefits and enhancing the quality of what students (and staff) experience. Of course, said participants, achieving positive student satisfaction ratings and improvements in learning and teaching quality did have a positive financial as well as moral benefit.

It was suggested that the links between these indicators and the rankings on role focus and influences, along with determining how the key indicators might best be measured, need further investigation.

Table 13 shows that DVCs and PVCs tend to emphasise bringing new initiatives into practice, and place less emphasis on specific teaching and learning activities. Assistant Heads, by contrast, emphasise achieving a collegial working environment and place the lowest emphasis on winning resources for their area of responsibility. Taken further, such analyses help identify the role-specific drivers and levers that shape and determine effective performance in each Learning and Teaching leadership role.

There are clear links between these indicators and the influences (Table 6, Chapter Two) and focus of different roles (Table 8, Chapter Three). For example, Heads of School rank decreased government funding first as an influence on their daily work, budget management as fifth in importance in delivering their role, and achieving a positive financial outcome for their area of responsibility fourth as an effectiveness indicator. Similarly they rank finding and retaining high-quality staff fifth as an influence on their daily work, managing staff as first in importance in delivering their role, and establishing a collegial working environment first as an effectiveness indicator.

Again, Associate Deans rank managing pressures for continuous change first as an influence on their daily work, reviewing teaching activities as third in importance in delivering their role, and producing significant improvements in learning and teaching quality first as an effectiveness indicator.

An efficient HR system would seek to make these links more explicit.

Academic leaders and change

As Table 13 shows, one of the top ranking indicators of effectiveness identified by the 513 learning and teaching leaders is the successful implementation of new initiatives.

Our academic leaders made regular comment on how they affect and are affected by the change forces outlined in Chapter Two as they seek to make change work. Table 14 presents the results of a thematic analysis of respondents' observations on being a leader in the change-focused context they must now negotiate, with some indicative comments. There are also echoes of the issues surrounding the need to build a more change capable culture in these results.

Table 14 Being an academic leader in a period of rapid change

Need for a shared strategy and greater focus on implementation	The thing that has surprised me most is that there is no one out there with the answers-I have spent much of my life believing that further up the hierarchy there is someone 'with a plan' as to what should happen. I am starting to realise that there is not and that we get through by sharing limited perspectives. Also it surprises me how long it takes to get things done and the level of unrealistic expectation (like getting things done yesterday). It surprises me how few people can conceptualise implementation processes in the sense of predicting ahead what the flow on effects of particular changes will be and the associated costs associated with implementing those changes. (Associate Dean, female, 56-65)
Change management and implementation is about relationships	That staff think I have all the answers when a few weeks previously I was 'one of them'. The effect my immediate manager has on how I undertake the job (or am expected to undertake the job) is important: micro-manager vs. hands off vs. supportive vs. disinterested vs. undermining. The effect of maintaining a positive attitude with the staff even when things are very difficult and I have to implement policy that dramatically affects staff (positively and negatively). The role itself sets you apart; it's lonely. (HOS/HOD, female, 46-55)
Leaders make decisions that affect others	The immense sense of a feeling of responsibility and accountability for making 'good' decisions that comes with a senior executive role. I make many decisions which could significantly affect the lives of students and staff, and there is more art to many of them than science. (DVC, male, 46-55)
Leaders can feel isolated	How isolated it is 'at the top'. Before I had this role I was involved in the usual social round of visits and dinners at other academic's places, lunches at my place, etc. Immediately I assumed the role of head of school, this entirely stopped, and the only such involvement I have now is if I organise an event, and then it is treated as a day at the boss's place. [In this context note that I have now been in this role for more than 10 years.] (HOS/HOD, male, 46-55)
No room to learn	The competing time pressures and the lack of time for reflection, reading and collegial discussion and exploration of issues. (Associate Dean, male, 45-56)
No time to plan	The amount of time you spend dealing with ad hoc problems and individual issues rather than strategic planning and implementation of new initiatives. (PVC, female, 46-55)
The volume of work & the need for greater focus and efficiency	The volume of administrative work. In my role, it is expected that I teach, perform research, and perform service to the university. The administrative (service) work that is required seems to be the only aspect of the job that is increasing rather than becoming streamlined. (Program Head/Coordinator, male, under 36)

The literature on academic leadership roles, challenges & effectiveness

The recent *Campus Review* (2006: 2) survey of 124 senior academic leaders from 35 Australian universities identifies the time spent on many of the tasks like those identified in Table 8. The Campus Review study found that approximately 50% of the DVCs, PVCs, and Deans who responded spend 60-69 hours a week on work-related activities, while more than 21% spend greater than 70 hours per week on such activities. Females reported spending longer hours on work-related activities than males. Those who were 55-plus were more inclined to spend longer hours on them than those who were in younger age groups.

In the broader literature on leadership roles, challenges and effectiveness the study of Deans and Heads is particularly prominent. Much of the empirical literature comes from the US (e.g. Aziz et al. 2005; Del Favero, 2006; Montez, 2003). Some studies can be found on more senior leader roles, such as Vice Chancellors (e.g. Kulati, 2003; Reponen, 1999). Far fewer studies, however, are found on more recent senior leadership positions like Pro Vice-Chancellor (Smith & Adams, 2006; Smith, Adams and Mount, 2007) or on the middle-tier leadership roles of Assistant/Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) (Kift, 2004) or Course Leader (Paterson, 1999). Parallel work funded by the ALTC on the role of Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) is providing important, focused insights into that role (e.g. Southwell, Scoufis & Hunt, 2006).

In Australia, while the title of 'Dean' is common across institutions, in practice the role and associated levels of authority and responsibility has, as already noted, been found to vary considerably between institutions (Sarros et al. 1997). Similar findings are identified by researchers on the Head of School/ Department role (e.g. Smith, 2005). As indicated earlier in this report, the shifting meaning of such roles presents particular challenges for identifying the characteristics of leaders, their work and learning needs. Any analysis, therefore, must be mindful of the potential differences as well as commonalities that may exist within the one leadership position. This said, the status of Deans as leaders instrumental to influencing change both within and outside their units is little disputed in the literature (Del Favero, 2006).

Wolverton et al's (2001) analysis of the challenges that Deans face brings out many of the tensions and dilemmas revealed in the present study. The authors found that Deans exist at the centre of complex relational webs comprising faculty, students, central administration, and external entities and support agencies. Their primary charge is to keep the resulting relationships finely balanced. To do this requires creating a positive culture, having knowledge of the legal and regulatory environments, technological literacy, financial management skills, a strategic perspective, a healthy means of maintaining professional and personal balance, and an enduring concern for the integrity of their faculty and institution. As the present study has revealed, this challenging mixture of responsibilities is necessary to address the complex and changing environment now faced by our universities.

The research reviewed in the current study suggests that Heads of School (also referred to as Department Heads or Department Chairs in the North American context) experience similar challenges, and perhaps in more intense and explicit ways as they have to manage both up and down. Bryman's (2007) review of effective leadership in higher education focused on Heads and Department Chairs for this very reason. Bryman (2007: 694) argues that:

> The department represents a crucial unit of analysis in universities, as it is often, if not invariably, a key administrative unit for the allocation of resources, and the chief springboard for the organisation's main teaching and research activities.

Bryman's rationale was that the department context places heads and chairs at the interface of different responsibilities and accountabilities. This is precisely what the current study has revealed. Yet it has also found that the Head of School role is insufficiently supported, acknowledged and developed. Ramsden (1998: 238–40) also gives focus to this area. He identifies some 50 paradoxical aspects of how the university Head of Department job has to be managed. They involve managing a range of paradoxes and dilemmas concerning:

■ Vision, strategic action, planning, resources management
(for example, how best to balance 'following the university line' with working to the department's advantage);

■ enabling, inspiring, motivating staff
(for example, how best to balance telling and directing staff with listening to and consulting with them, or encouraging disagreement with avoiding conflict);

■ recognition, reward, performance assessment
(for example, how best to balance delegating tasks with controlling the outcomes, or making staff accountable with letting them set their own professional standards, and rewarding effort with rewarding achievement);

■ personal learning and development
(for example, how best to balance seeing academic leadership as a career with seeing it as a temporary job)

This notion of leadership as requiring one to balance what, at first glance, appear to be contradictory ways of approaching a perplexing situation is a key finding in both the present study and earlier ones (e.g. Binney & Williams, 1995; Scott, 1999). In summary, it involves being able to figure our where to put the 'and' between the two poles of a dilemma or two apparently opposite ways of proceeding.

Drawing on the earlier work of Gmelch and Miskin (1993), Sarros et al. (1999: 165) highlight the complexity of the Head of School/Department Chair role. They conclude that: "Nearly 80% of all administrative decisions in higher education are made at the departmental level". This context impacts on the scope and purpose of the leader's role. It can create particular tensions as leaders attempt to deal with having to be administrators, faculty members and researchers (Wolverton et al. 2005). Higher ranked academic leaders, Wolverton et al. (2005) claim, do not have to deal with remaining as proficient in the last two areas.

Aziz et al's (2005) case study of a university in Ohio with around 20,000 students involved a content analysis of leaders' knowledge, skills and attributes (KSAs) in the literature, and document analysis of the content and format of current Department Heads training programs in the US. From their review, the authors compiled a preliminary list of KSAs, which served as a foundation for interviews with 18 Heads and Directors. The researchers developed and used a structured interview around a critical incident. Among their findings, they concluded that local leaders like Department Heads operate in an environment of increased accountability (e.g. financial and student needs), which in turn affects their work. This research also shows it affects the leaders too.

In a study replicated across the US and Australia, Wolverton et al. (1999) found that, on average, Australian Heads of Department experienced significantly higher levels of stress than their US counterparts. The Australian phase of the study comprised a national survey of university Department Heads, which provided a sample of 1,680 Heads—with a cumulative response rate of 51 per cent. Within the survey, Heads were asked to rank on a five-point Likert-type scale the extent to which 41 work-related stressors were affecting them. Wolverton et al. (1999) found that the administration tasks of setting up assessment and monitoring and review associated with the introduction of federally mandated Quality Assurance requirements had a key negative impact on the stress felt by Department Heads. These responsibilities typically fell to Heads of Department. The authors conclude that these new expectations may also strain inter-leadership relationships between the Head and Dean.

The work of a Department Chair or Head of School is also different to being a faculty member (Wolverton et al. 1999). Managing and leading a department brings the Chair into contact with different groups and individuals. This is quite a contrast to their normal day-to-day practice of working with a small number of relatively like-minded researchers. The authors conclude that:

> … interpersonal skills, the ability to communicate, the willingness to respond rapidly to situations, among other skills … are essential to being an effective department chair (p. 229).

Such findings have implications for the interpretation and meaning of what counts as quality leadership and how best institutions can support the transition in and out of each formal leadership role. More is said on what counts as effective leadership in Chapter Four.

Not only is the scope and focus of the work of being a Department Head a challenge, so too is their average time in role. As noted earlier, Wolverton et al. (1999) highlight that 65% of Department Chairs return to faculty status after a period of serving as an administrator. Aziz et al. (2005) suggest that turnover of Department Chairs is a specific issue when it comes to their development in and performance of the role. They proposed that the provision of training will improve the performance of Chairs and their departments, and the speed at which they master the role. However, as Montez (2003) points out, the only forms of preparation available to prospective leaders are after their appointment—an issue we return to in Chapter Five. The present study has found a similar pattern.

Consistent with recent school leadership literature (e.g. Dinham, 2005; Mulford et al. 2004), the literature in higher education (Ramsden, 1998; Bryman, 2007) shows that leadership does make a difference to academic effectiveness. How this occurs is discussed in the next chapter.

The important role of leaders in creating conditions conducive to learning is neither new nor surprising. However, as the discussion so far suggests, the changing context and expectations of leaders is fraught with complexities and tensions. Leaders are expected not only to manage their area of responsibility well but to know how to develop their department and university's capacity to constantly review and improve performance.

The study's findings on the need to focus on middle level leadership roles align with long-standing research. For example, in a study of Associate Deans, Heads of School and Heads of Department in 1995 (Scott and Tiffin, 1995), the following conclusions were drawn:

The role of Associate Dean is distinctively different from the role of Head of School-it highlights collaboration, team-building, identifying and linking best practice and leading change across the entire faculty rather than on one campus or in one school … the role of HOS is more vertical in operation, whereas the role of A/Dean is more horizontal … the HOS is responsible for the administration of a large budget and staff appraisal and supervision, whereas the A/Dean (in most cases) is not. As one A/Dean who was a former Head of School told us: 'I used to administer millions, now I'm directly responsible for just over $20,000' … There was unanimous agreement that a mechanism to prevent Heads of Department from spending large amounts of their time on routine matters was also recommended. HODs identified dealing with staff and student grievances, managing cultural diversity, trying to motivate uninterested staff, developing a positive culture and effective change management as key issues.

Common themes from the studies reviewed and the results of the present study identify the key role academic leaders play in building a productive culture (Appendix Three) and in shaping and implementing effective change. It also shows how academic leaders in the many roles included in the study are affected differentially by and have to balance the competing demands, tensions and stresses that have grown over the past quarter of a century.

What is clear from our broader review of the literature is that those institutions that manage the growing change pressures best have clear, complementary, well spread and valid leadership roles; selection processes for new academic leaders that focus on clear role descriptions; and are places that specifically seek to create the conditions that give these people room to lead and use valid performance indicators to judge effectiveness.

Summary

This chapter provides the material against which each university can review its current leadership practices and HR systems. And it confirms a key insight - that leadership in universities is not something that happens 'at the top' - it must be spread appropriately and operate in an explicitly understood and complementary way throughout the organisation. It shows that everyone is a leader in their own area of expertise and that the institutions that manage change best have realised this. In this regard far more recognition of key intermediary roles like Head of School and local ones like Head of Program have emerged as being necessary. Also, there is need for a parallel study of an area not covered by the remit for this investigation-the role and nature of informal leaders at universities.

Having scoped the territory of leadership - what a distributed system of academic leadership might best focus upon and the indicators that can be used to judge effective performance - it is important to identify exactly what capabilities count most for the effective delivery of each role.

It is upon this issue that the next chapter concentrates.

04

The Leadership Capabilities That Count

Chapter Four identifies the capabilities and strategies that count most in addressing the key challenges and areas of focus identified in Chapter Three for each of the higher education leadership roles studied.

The findings align with studies of successful leaders in other sectors of education and of successful graduates in nine professions. In particular, a specific set of capabilities centring around personal and interpersonal emotional intelligence, along with a contingent and diagnostic way of thinking emerge as being critical to effective role delivery across all of the leadership positions studied (Figure 1, Chapter One).

A key implication of this finding is that the capability profiles and methods used to identify and select university leaders may need to be substantially revised. There are also important implications for what should be given focus in academic leadership identification, selection and development programs.

Overview

After responding to quantitative and qualitative items on their background, their role, the major influences on their work, what activities they give most focus to in their role, how they judge their effectiveness and the key challenges and satisfactions in their job, the 513 respondents were invited to rate the relative importance of items concerning personal capability, interpersonal capability, cognitive capabilities, and the key generic and learning and teaching skills and knowledge necessary for the effective delivery of their role.

To enable easy interpretation of the findings that follow Tables 15 to 18 present the Leadership Capability Scales and Items. These are based on the study's conceptual framework (Figure 1) which was discussed in detail in Chapter One. Then the feedback from the national and international workshops on the results, their significance and their implications is summarised.

The study's Leadership Capability Scales and Items

Table 15 Personal capability scales and items

Scale	Item
Self Regulation	Deferring judgment and not jumping in too quickly to resolve a problem
	Understanding my personal strengths and limitations
	Admitting to and learning from my errors
	Bouncing back from adversity
	Maintaining a good work/life balance and keeping things in perspective
	Remaining calm under pressure or when things take an unexpected turn
Decisiveness	Being willing to take a hard decision
	Being confident to take calculated risks
	Tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty
	Being true to one's personal values and ethics
Commitment	Having energy, passion and enthusiasm for learning and teaching
	Wanting to achieve the best outcome possible
	Taking responsibility for program activities and outcomes
	Persevering when things are not working out as anticipated
	Pitching in and undertaking menial tasks when needed

Table 16 Interpersonal capability scales and items

Scale	Item
Influencing	Influencing people's behaviour and decisions in effective ways
	Understanding how the different groups that make up my university operate and influence different situations
	Working with very senior people within and beyond my university without being intimidated
	Motivating others to achieve positive outcomes
	Working constructively with people who are 'resistors' or are over-enthusiastic
	Developing and using networks of colleagues to solve key workplace problems
	Giving and receiving constructive feedback to/from work colleagues and others
Empathising	Empathising and working productively with students from a wide range of backgrounds
	Listening to different points of view before coming to a decision
	Empathising and working productively with staff and other key players from a wide range of backgrounds
	Developing and contributing positively to team-based programs
	Being transparent and honest in dealings with others

Table 17 Cognitive capability scales and items

Scale	Item
Diagnosis	Diagnosing the underlying causes of a problem and taking appropriate action to address it
	Recognising how seemingly unconnected activities are linked
	Recognising patterns in a complex situation
	Identifying from a mass of information the core issue or opportunity in any situation
Strategy	Seeing and then acting on an opportunity for a new direction
	Tracing out and assessing the likely consequences of alternative courses of action
	Using previous experience to figure out what's going on when a current situation takes an unexpected turn
	Thinking creatively and laterally
	Having a clear, justified and achievable direction in my area of responsibility
	Seeing the best way to respond to a perplexing situation
	Setting and justifying priorities for my daily work
Flexibility and Responsiveness	Adjusting a plan of action in response to problems that are identified during its implementation
	Making sense of and learning from experience
	Knowing that there is never a fixed set of steps for solving workplace problems

Table 18 Leadership competency scales and items

Scale	Item
Learning and Teaching	Understanding how to develop an effective higher education learning program
	Having a high level of up-to-date knowledge of what engages university students in productive learning
	Understanding how to design and conduct an evaluation of a higher education learning program
	Understanding how to implement successfully a new higher education program
	Being on top of current developments in learning and teaching
	Knowing how to identify and disseminate good learning and management practice across the unit or university
University Operations	Understanding the role of risk management and litigation in my work
	Understanding how universities operate
	Understanding of industrial relations issues and processes as they apply to higher education
	Being able to help my staff learn how to deliver necessary changes effectively
	An ability to chair meetings effectively
	Having sound administrative and resource management skills
Self-organisation Skills	Being able to manage my own ongoing professional learning and development
	Being able to use IT effectively to communicate and perform key work functions
	Being able to organise my work and manage time effectively
	Being able to make effective presentations to a range of different groups

Overall Findings

The overall mean importance ratings from the 513 academic leaders on the 11 capability scales and five key capability domains identified in Tables 15 to 18 is shown below in Figure 5. Although this display compresses any variation that may be present across roles and institutions or other characteristics, it does show that, in general, each of the capability scales has been rated very highly by the respondents. The lowest ratings are given for university operations, while the highest ratings are given to the self-regulation, empathising and flexibility and responsiveness dimensions. It is important to note, however, that the overall range of mean scores is quite low.

These results show that each of the measured areas of capability is considered to be highly important for effective leadership by our 513 academic leaders. It indicates that, in the way predicted in Chapter One and from the perspective of these people, the five domains and 11 specific sub-domains of capability and competence all have a role to play in effective academic leadership.

It indicates that what is necessary for effective performance as an academic leader is the combination of emotional intelligence (both personal and interpersonal), cognitive capabilities and a particular set of relevant skills and knowledge as outlined in Tables 15 to 18 above. This serves to confirm the conceptual model summarised in Figure 1, Chapter One. The results also align well with those from parallel studies that have used the same framework in other sectors of education (Scott, 2003).
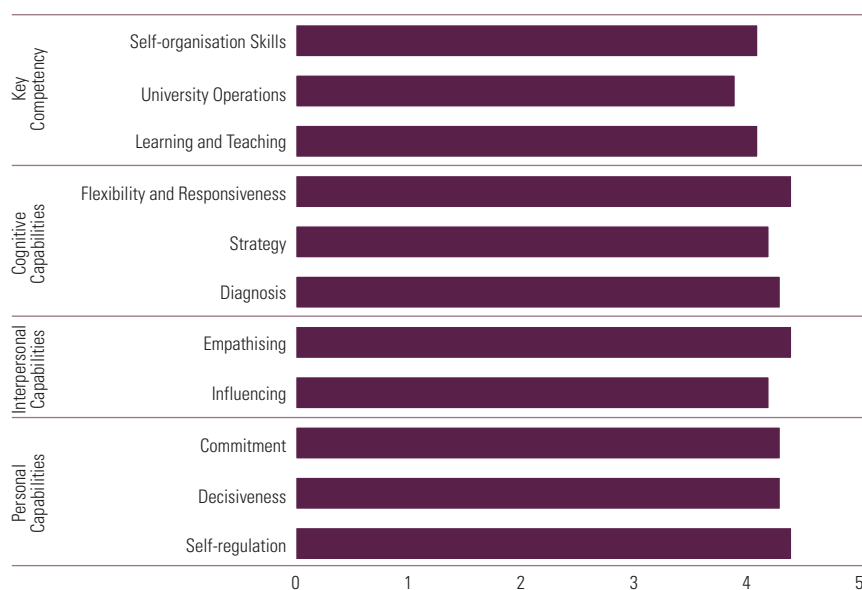

Figure 5 Mean scores for the 11 leadership capability scales

An analysis was also undertaken of the extensive qualitative data generated from the 513 leaders' responses to the following open-ended questions in the online survey:

> "Briefly, what are the three most challenging aspects of your current role"

and

> "Think of a time when you took up your current role when you believe your capabilities as a leader were most challenged. Please outline the situation, explaining whether it was expected, how it came about and what you found most challenging about it. Then please note how you went about figuring out what to do and how well this worked".

The most common challenges in each academic leadership role have already been identified and discussed in Chapter Three (Table 11).

In terms of addressing these challenges the qualitative analysis demonstrated that, although the required combination of personal, interpersonal and cognitive capabilities is common across roles, the level, sophistication and consistency of their delivery becomes more demanding in roles like DVC and Executive Dean. The most demanding roles are indicated not only in the sorts of challenges identified, and the scope and level of accountability for the activities to be undertaken, but also in respondents' analogies (Chapter Four, Table 7) and their self-identified effectiveness criteria (Chapter Three, Table 13).

As noted earlier, the Head of School role emerges as being particularly tricky as it requires incumbents to manage both up and down. The Head of Program role emerges once again as being the final arbiter of whether a desired change is taken up and implemented with students.

The analysis of challenges also confirms that the academic leader's capabilities are most tested when what was planned is not working out, when the unexpected takes place or when one is confronted with complacency, cynicism, stonewalling, white-anting, needless bureaucracy or disengaged staff. Every challenging situation identified had a complex human dimension and was peppered with dilemmas.

The findings in Figure 5 and below can be used to enable academics interested in becoming a learning and teaching leader to self-assess their potential by completing the online survey for themselves and comparing their results with those already in the position they are considering. The findings in this chapter have important implications also for what should be given focus as leaders are selected and to ensure that succession plans to replace the current leadership as they retire are well formulated. And, as we shall see in Chapter Five, they have important implications for what should be given priority in academic leadership development programs.

Table 19 below presents the top ranking capability items on importance. Although the interval between the rankings is not always statistically significant, taken as a whole the results in this table give a powerful message-they indicate that key aspects of emotional intelligence (both personal and interpersonal) are perceived by these respondents to be critical to effective performance across all roles. As Fullan (2001b: 74) emphasises:

> If relationships are (almost) everything, a high EQ is a must. And the good news is that emotional intelligence can be learned ... Effective leaders work on their own and others' emotional development. There is no greater skill needed for sustainable improvement.

Table 19 Top twelve ranking leadership capabilities (the rank of each item is given in brackets, 1 – highest)

Personal capabilities	Cognitive capabilities
Being true to one's personal values & ethics (2) Remaining calm under pressure or when things take an unexpected turn (3) Understanding my personal strengths & limitations (5) Energy & passion for L&T (7) Admitting to & learning from my errors (10)	Identifying from a mass of information the core issue or opportunity in any situation (8) Making sense of and learning from experience (9) Thinking creatively & laterally (11) Diagnosing the underlying causes of a problem & taking appropriate action to address it (12)
Interpersonal capabilities	**Skills & knowledge**
Being transparent & honest in dealings with others (1) Empathising and working productively with staff and other key players from a wide range of backgrounds (4)	Being able to organise my work & manage time effectively (6)

The validity of what is presented in Table 19 was confirmed at the study's review workshops when participants were asked to identify the distinguishing characteristics of the best academic leader they had encountered. This question was posed and answered by participants before any of the study's results were discussed. It is also consistent with the findings of studies of successful graduates (Vescio, 2005) and, as just noted, studies of successful principals (Scott, 2003), along with studies of successful leaders in non-educational contexts. The findings were also validated in discussions with the UK Foundation for Leadership in Higher Education in London in December 2006 and, more recently, at a meeting of Vice-Presidents of Canadian universities in Edmonton.

These findings and specific analyses like those below have important HR implications for the identification, selection and development of our next generation of academic leaders.

Specific analyses

The contextual and 'situated' nature of leadership is a key theme running through this research. The following analyses trace out this theme in more detail.

Figure 6 shows the percentage of variation in the eleven scale scores that is explained by a selection of the leader demographic characteristics discussed in Chapter One—university type; university; main disciplinary background of the leader; age; and gender.
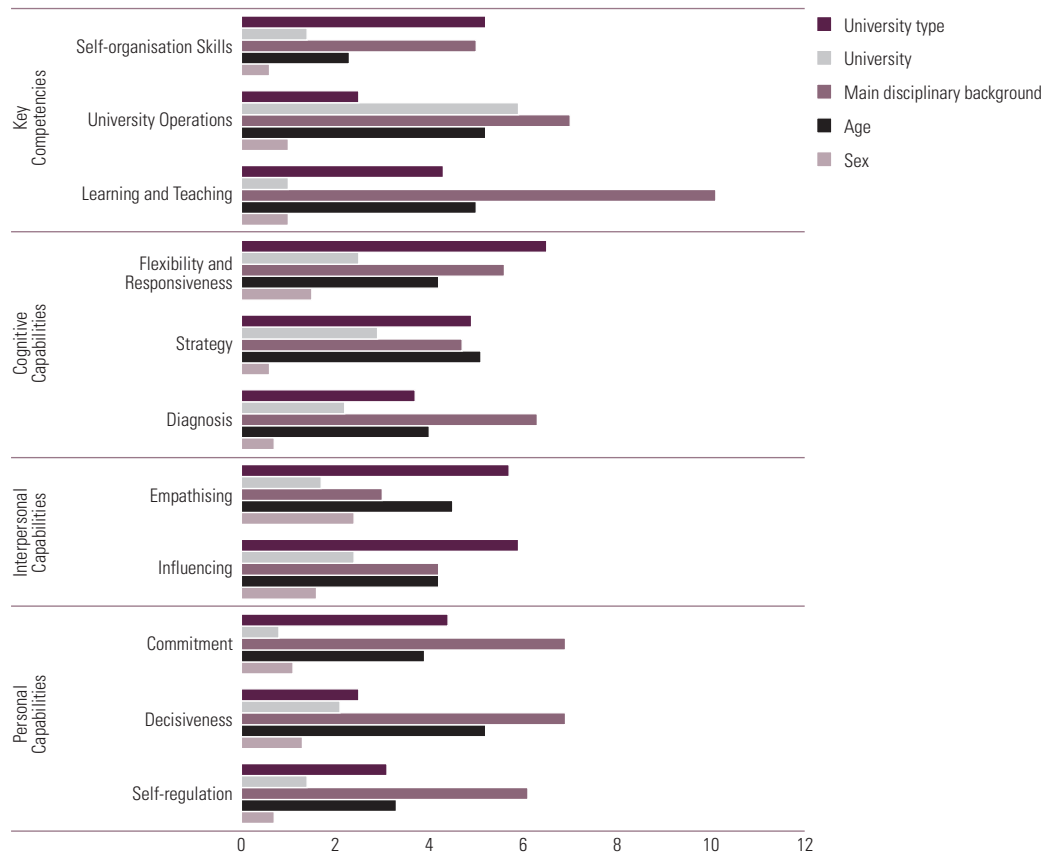
Figure 6 Variance explained by leader demographic characteristics

A leader's gender explains between 2.5 and 6.5 per cent of the variation in the mean ratings on the 11 capability scales. It explains the least in terms of decisiveness (personal capability), university operations (competency) and self-regulation (personal capability); and most in terms of empathising (interpersonal capability), influencing (interpersonal capability) and flexibility and responsiveness (cognitive capability).

Age, by contrast, appears to explain very little variation in the capability importance ratings, except for university operations where it explains around five per cent of the variance in scores.

Disciplinary background tends to explain more than five per cent of the variance in most of the capability scales, but particularly in decisiveness, commitment, university operations, and learning and teaching.

The type of university at which a leader works explains less variation than the actual institution, which explains around four per cent of the variation in capability ratings.

In summary, disciplinary background has the highest explanatory power of the demographic characteristics studied, followed by gender, university, age and university type. It should be noted that these analyses were conducted independently at this stage. This was seen as being appropriate, given the lack of existing empirical findings on which to base an explanatory model.

Figure 7 takes a specific example for more detailed analysis. It shows a consistent trend across the eleven scales in terms of disciplinary background, the area which Figure 6 shows to have the highest explanatory power for variations in capability ratings. It shows, for example, that respondents from a

Health background (91 of our 513 respondents) and Education background (102 of our respondents) give consistently high ratings across all scales compared, for example, with respondents from an Engineering or Management and Commerce background. The 107 respondents from a Society and Culture background - our largest group of respondents - give particular emphasis to the empathising scale, with medium to high ratings for the others.

There is also considerable variation within particular scales. For example, in the Learning and Teaching scale people from an Education and Health background give much higher importance ratings than those from a Management & Commerce, Law or IT background.
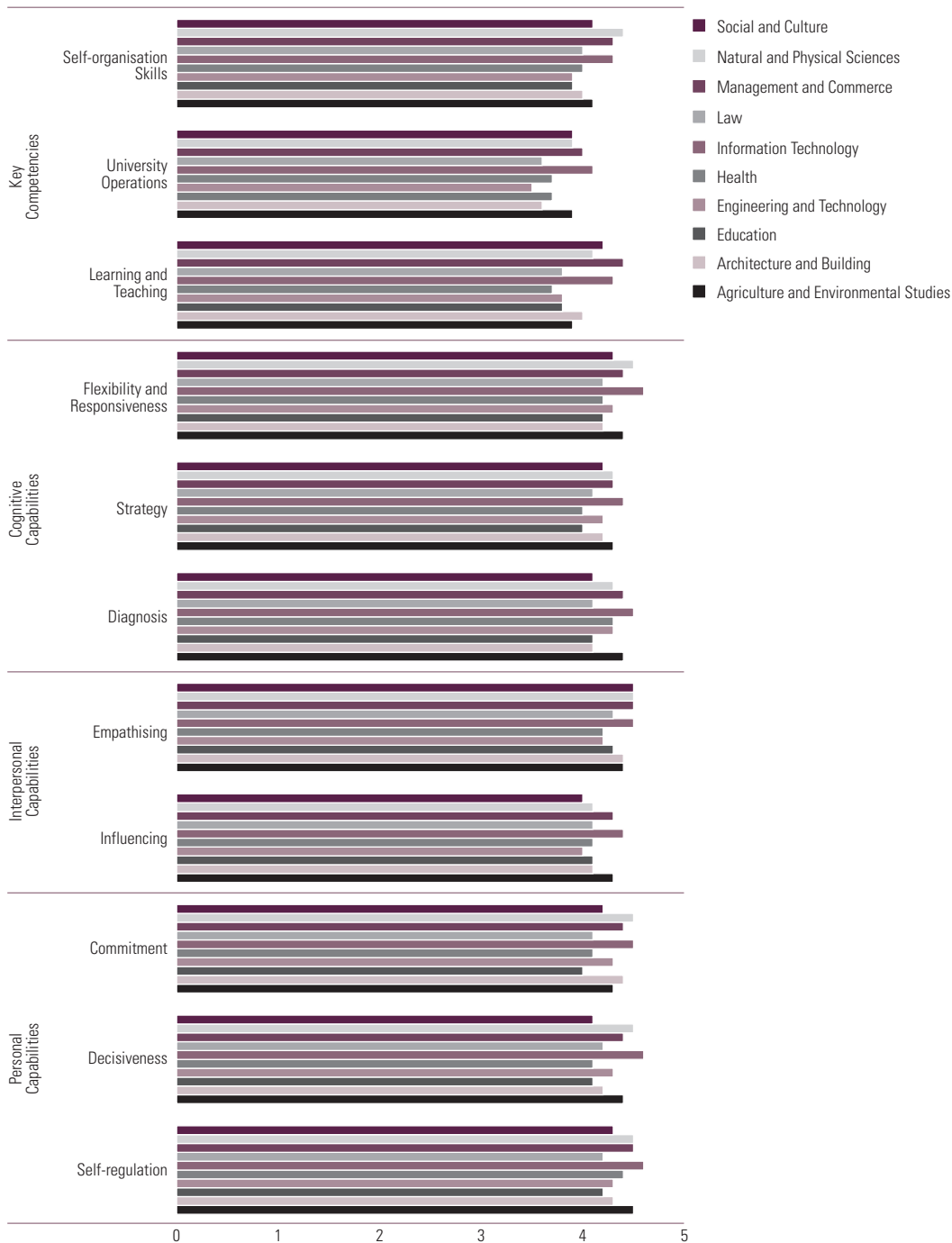
Figure 7 Mean capability scale scores by leaders' disciplinary background

Figure 8 depicts the explanatory contribution made by a range of role characteristics and shows that this is lower than for demographics. This suggests that, in general, it is the particular backgrounds and characteristics of individuals and their perceptions of context, rather than the specific role characteristics, which shape perceptions of effective leadership. The number of years a leader has held their role explains, on average over the eleven scales, a little under two per cent of the variation.

The most important role characteristic, however, is the nature of the current role itself. Prior role plays a part too, although in nearly all instances this is linearly related to current role.
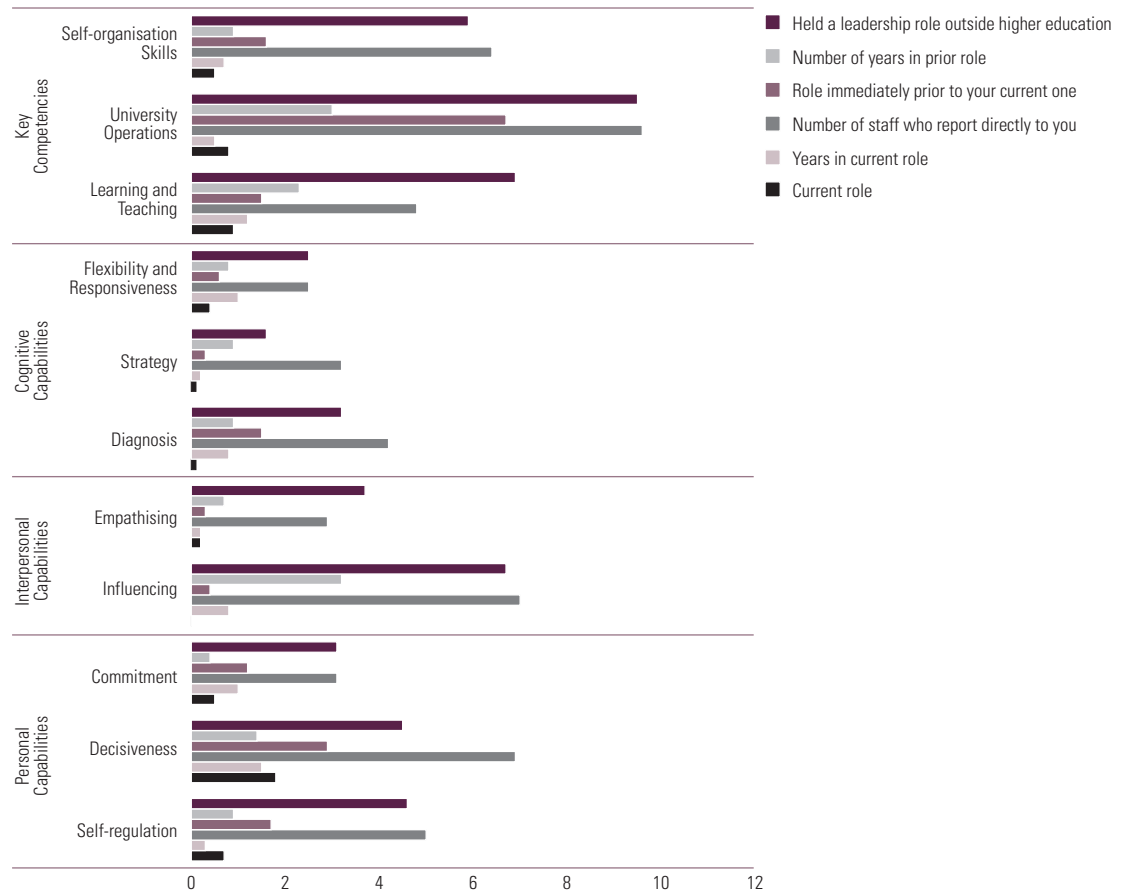
Figure 8 Variance explained by leader role characteristics

Figure 9 shows the mean capability scale scores sorted by respondents' role. It indicates that, while the mean scores are consistently high across the roles, there are some significant points of variation between roles within each aspect of capability. This again serves to confirm the hypothesis that academic leadership is, at least to some extent, 'situated' in both the context of operation and the role one occupies.

For example, whilst Assistant Heads and Associate Deans place the highest emphasis on learning and teaching knowledge and skills, DVCs place a much lower emphasis on such competencies. Assistant Heads tend to place a higher emphasis on many capabilities, especially compared with PVCs. But the range of differences overall is relatively low.
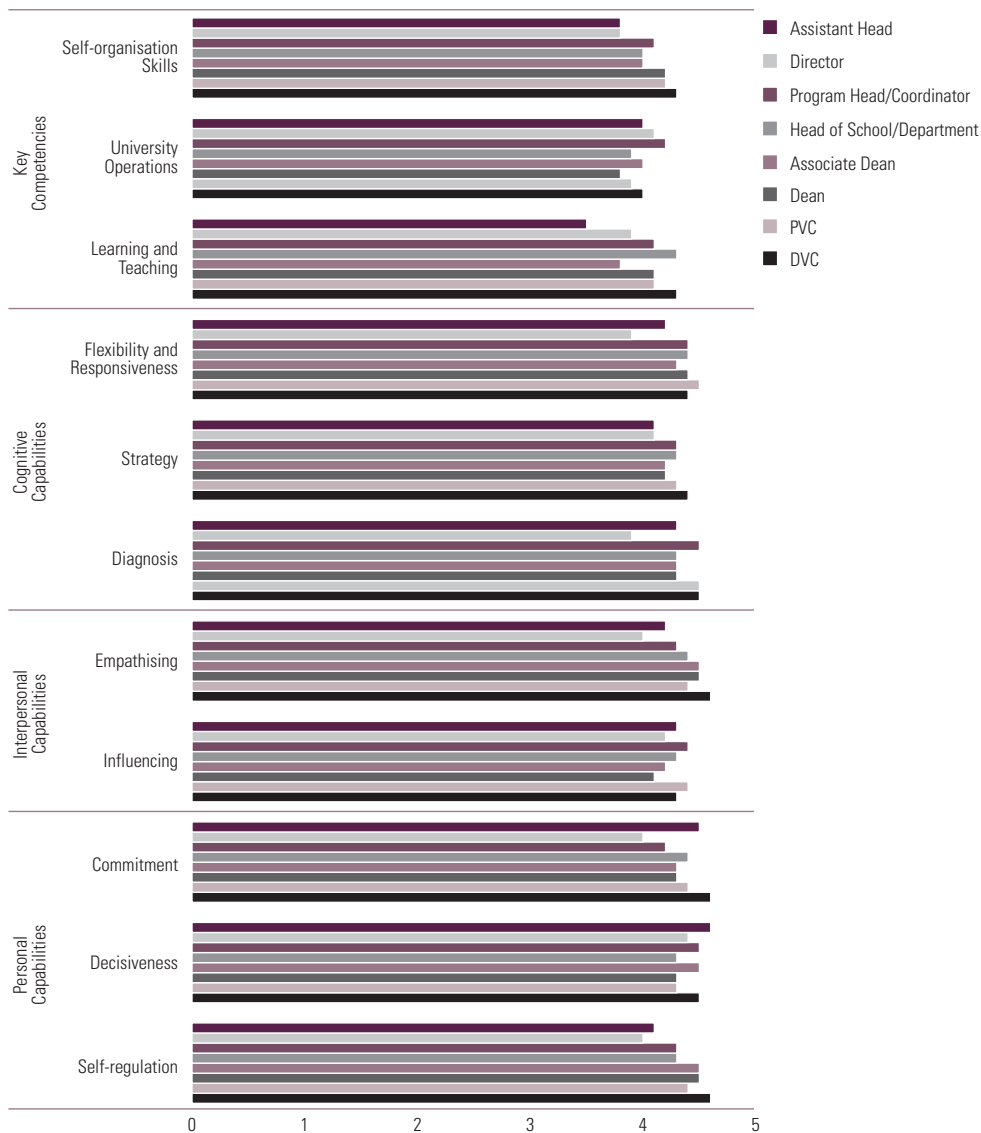
Figure 9 Mean capability scale scores by role

Figure 10 examines the relationship between respondents' ratings on the relative impact of different contextual influences on their daily work (Table 6, Chapter Two) and their importance ratings for different leadership capabilities and competencies.

It shows that the reported contextual influences in Chapter Two explain around six per cent of the variation in capability importance ratings, although this varies between one per cent to just over twenty per cent. Perceptions of institutional change capacity tend to explain the most variation among categories, and perceptions of student pressures the least.

The results suggest that the most striking contextual influences operate on the knowledge and skills associated with university operations, in which managing competitive pressures, institutional change capacity and external accountabilities all appear to play a role. Perceptions of the capacity of the institution to handle change also appear to mediate leaders' perceptions of the extent to which their capacity to influence others is an important characteristic of leadership. These two capabilities

are the ones that appear to be most affected by contextual pressures, while capabilities associated with learning and teaching, self-organisation and commitment are the least.
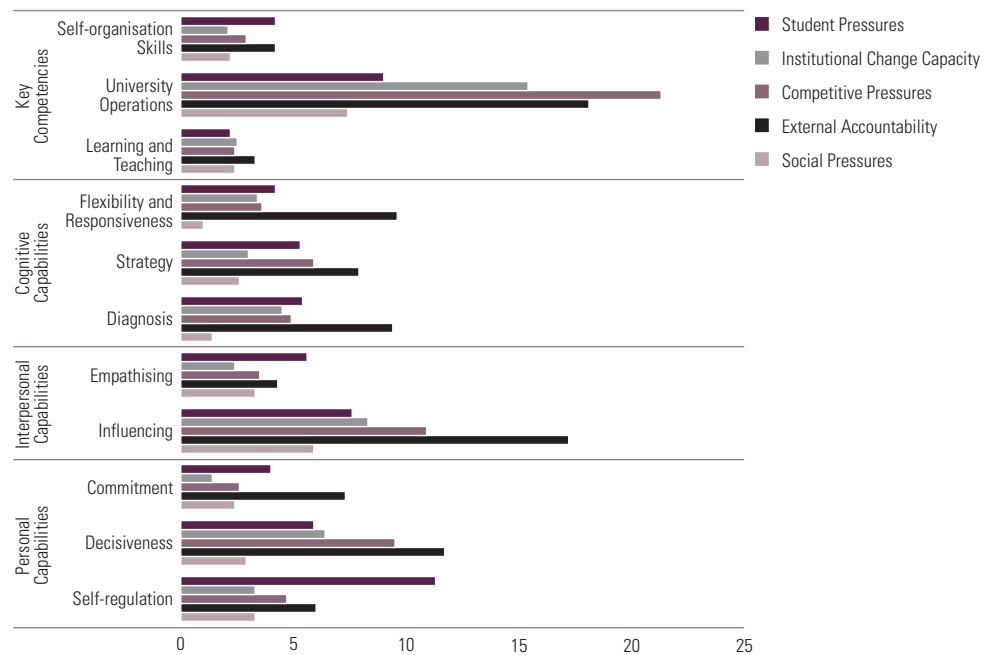
Figure 10 Variance explained by reported leadership influences

As anticipated, the focus of a leader's work influences the capabilities that are seen to be important for effective performance. Figure 11 shows that the extent to which a leader takes part in academic activities, networking, planning and policy development shapes or is shaped by their perception of the capabilities that count for effective performance in their role.

The influence of work focus (Table 8, Chapter Three) is particularly strong on the knowledge and skill associated with university operations and the capacity to influence others. Over twenty per cent of the variation in university operation scores is explained by a leader's involvement in networking, management and administration, planning and policy development. Around twenty per cent of the variation associated with perceptions of whether influencing others is required for effective leadership is associated with the extent to which a leader networks, engages in planning and policy development, and manages staff. This gives a clear indication that the focus of a leader's work shapes their perception of the capabilities that are required for effective leadership.
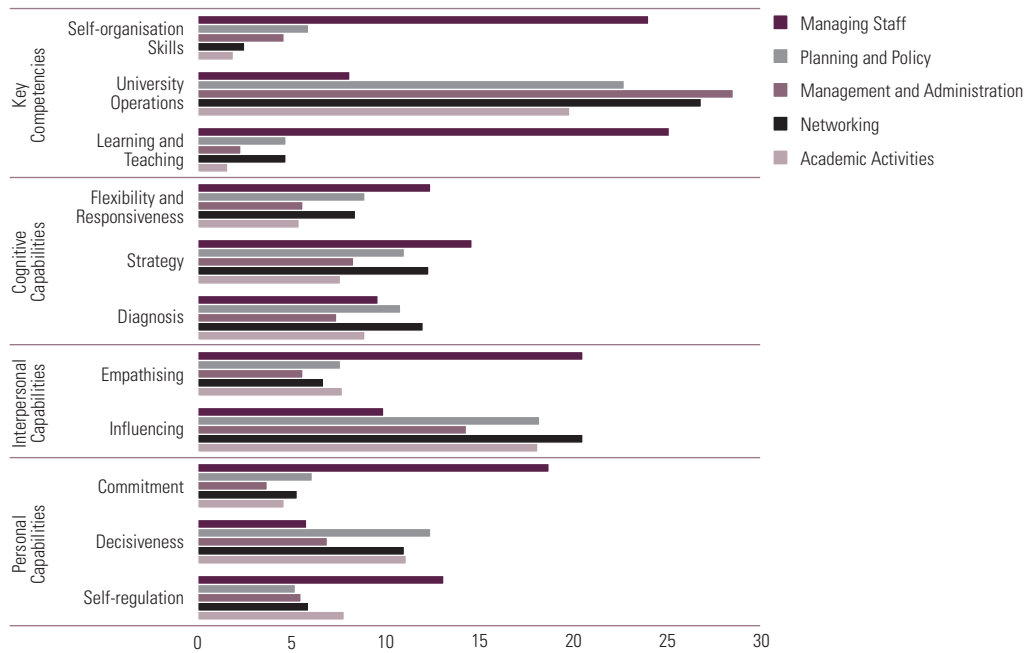
Figure 11 Variance explained by reported work focus

Figure 12 shows that the perceived markers of effective leadership (Table 13, Chapter Three) tend to account for around ten per cent of the variation in importance ratings for leadership capability. The capacity to implement initiatives effectively, to enhance recognition and reputation of the institution, and achieve personal and interpersonal outcomes have the most influential role, while being focused on learning and teaching successes and financial performance outcomes does slightly less to shape perceptions of effective leadership capabilities.
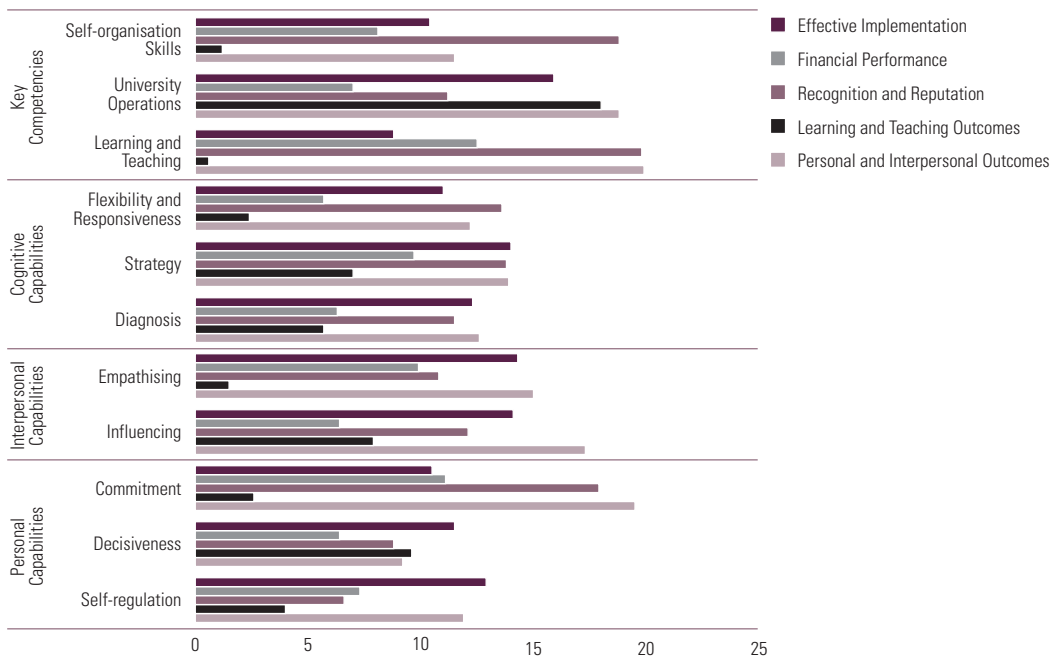
Figure 12 Variance explained by reported markers of effective leadership

Testing the self-report ratings for key academic leadership capabilities against the perceptions of other staff

It was important to check if these self-report ratings on the relative importance of the leadership capabilities outlined in Tables 15 to 18 align with the findings from other sources, including the perceptions of other academic staff.

As noted earlier, at the national workshops on the study before the online survey results were presented, the 490 workshop participants were asked to identify an effective academic leader and list out the characteristics that distinguished the person selected. A very similar profile to that identified by the 513 respondents to the online survey emerged, including a particular emphasis on the individual's personal and interpersonal capabilities. This serves to confirm that the perceptions of the leaders align with those of other players. The following responses were given across all of the workshops when the participants identified a highly effective academic leader with whom they had worked:

Good listener, can take advice	They feel comfortable in their own skin
Like a swan - elegant and calm above the water but paddling hard	Calm when under public fire
Energetic and enthusiastic - a student focus	Can relate to people across all levels of the organisation - able to motivate and engage a diverse range of staff to work together
Can take people with them	Work with you rather than control you
Clear vision and can articulate it	Are informed decision-makers & strategic thinkers
Has charisma, is inspirational & persuasive	Can pinpoint the key issue in a complex situation
Positive outlook - optimistic; hopeful	Stand with you through hard times
Practice what they preach	
Has integrity, is authentic, consistent, transparent & fair	

Ramsden (1998: 81), in a review of research on academic staff expectations of heads of university departments, found similar results. He reports that staff value leaders who have a focus on change, use participative management, recognise performance, have expertise in teaching and curriculum, are good at resource acquisition and management, and who listen to staff. Line academic staff look for leaders who maintain standards, consult, select staff well, who can administer effectively, advocate for the department, have vision and evaluate performance.

In Ramsden's (1998:82) email survey of 100 Heads of Department from universities in Hong Kong, New Zealand, UK, Singapore and Australia one question asked was:

> "Please think of someone you know personally who has done an outstanding job of providing effective academic leadership. Could you please describe in as much detail as possible, exactly what this person has done that constitutes highly effective leadership".

The key findings in response to this question were as follows.

Outstanding academic leaders:

- Have a vision which is in harmony with academic staff (including an ability to see beyond immediate problems) and possess academic integrity (i.e. they are authentic, trustworthy, respectful, fair, empathetic, lead by example) and are efficient (Ramsden, 1998: 82-3);
- Are able to meld a diverse group into a coherent organisation with a clear, common ideal (Ramsden, 1998: 84);
- Are good at networking (plugged in), are skilled at (micro) political activity and at strategic alignment (risk-taking, forward-looking, entrepreneurial) (Ramsden, 1998: 84);
- Inspire (trust), listen, are able to survive setbacks, give confidence (in where they are going and in staff) and provide hope (a positive outlook), work collaboratively, follow through, stick with decisions (Ramsden, 1998: 84-5);
- Provide sound recognition, performance management (link individual goals to department's goals and help for staff to 'learn the gaps' in their expertise) and support staff learning (encourage junior staff, support hard working achievers, organise just rewards for all, set up an environment which recognises good work) (Ramsden, 1998: 86).

In discussing the results and the observation that 'drawing up ideal types for this kind of endeavour may lead us to look for the impossible', Ramsden (1998:82) comments:

Leadership cannot be reduced to an exact method ... It is nevertheless beneficial to examine what university staff themselves think about effective leadership ... We cannot change what we are but we can do things differently.

Marshall et al. (2001: 5–6) reports that, in focus groups with Australian university senior lecturers and professors (many of whom were also Heads of Department or Division), when these groups considered what should characterise persons in formal leadership roles:

... the group focused on matters to do with human relationships. They wanted an academic leader to be supportive of staff, to build community, to be proactive and to have the courage to 'call it as they see it'. They were mainly thinking about the roles of Heads of Department when they developed these ideas ... They believed that, on the whole, the university culture does not foster the kinds of qualities they described ... Because the academic culture is one of individualism, they believed academics are not comfortable with taking responsibility for, or giving feedback to, their colleagues on their work.

There is also alignment with the broader literature on the key motivators of employee satisfaction. For example, in a study cited by Clark (1997) that examined over 75 key components of employee satisfaction, the single most reliable predictor of employee satisfaction in an organisation was trust and confidence in the top leadership; clear, regular communication from leaders to employees about the company's overall business strategy and how employees are contributing to this; how the company is doing; and how well the employees' area is doing in achieving these objectives.

Implications

How the above results play out in practice and can be actioned was determined by an analysis of what the 513 leaders said they did to effectively address the challenges identified in Table 11, Chapter Three.

These qualitative results were then explored in considerable detail at the national and international workshops. The following implications and suggestions for actioning the findings were repeatedly identified by both the respondents and the participants at the study's review workshops.

Practical ways to action the findings

First, leaders value practical ideas on how to put the key findings about the key personal and interpersonal capabilities and contingent thinking into practice. The following were repeatedly endorsed at all of the study's review workshops as being practical strategies that leaders can work with to action these findings. Under each heading a consolidation of the recurring suggestions made by both participants in the survey and at the workshops on the results are given:

■ Always listen, link and lead in that order

> For example, 'listen' means contact those who are important to the implementation of a desired change with a menu of what might work and ask them to assess each option for its relevance, desirability, clarity and feasibility. 'Link' means bring together what has been said by these people to develop an 'owned', consolidated and deliverable plan of action. 'Lead' means use the key lessons on effective change implementation and adult learning for change to assist people to put the desired change into practice, monitor the results and refine it.

■ Listen to 'resistors'

> People who resist engagement can be an important source of information as a change project in learning and teaching is shaped and implemented. They can identify many of the 'trip-wires' that must be overcome. Listening to 'resistors' is also a positive way to handle disengagement. National workshop participants endorsed the strategy of always talking individually with such people before having a public meeting on a contentious topic. As a senior academic from the area of Electrical Engineering observed on this issue at one of the national workshops:
>
> > We need to listen more to the resistors - in an integrated circuit a resistor can get hot and slow down the current but it does serve an important purpose.
>
> And as Fullan (2001b: 65) concludes:
>
> > Defining effective leadership as appreciating resistance is another of those remarkable discoveries: dissent is seen as a potential source of new ideas and breakthroughs. The absence of conflict is a sign of decay ... investing only in likeminded innovators is not necessarily a good thing. They become more likeminded ... If you include the naysayers, noise in the early stages will yield later, greater implementation.

■ Be accessible but within clear parameters

> Just as higher education students like to be able to access staff, so too staff like to have access to their academic leaders. However, in both cases, expectations about when and how leaders can be accessed and when they cannot needs to be made clear from the outset and adhered to. Being accessible is critical to identifying small problems before they become big ones.

■ Email to confirm each discussion

> The best strategy when delegating a task is to talk first with the person concerned (by phone or face-to-face) to clarify what will happen and to confirm shared expectations. Then always confirm this with an email saying: 'Dear xxx, further to our conversation this morning it is great that you will be able to do xxxx and that you will produce xxxx by xxxxx. Please let me know if there is anything we need to add, drop or change in this. Otherwise I look forward to hearing about the outcomes on xxxx'.

■ Build a reciprocal network of those doing the same job

> Just as higher education student learning is a profoundly social experience, with informal peer support being a key factor in retention and productive learning, so it is for academic leaders. This form of networking operates best if leaders in the same role and context are in informal contact and have the opportunity to discuss common problems as they arise. Fullan (2008) identifies purposeful networking as a key to providing organisational glue and ensuring the link between top-down and bottom-up strategies to effective change. In the present study the use of an AUQA-commended Head of Programs Network in one university, led by the PVC (L&T), was seen as being a good example of purposeful networking.

■ Set clear expectations and indicators of success upfront

> This is as important for staff as it is for students. One way to do this is, as already noted, to use an email to confirm the agreement between the leader and staff on what is to be produced, by what time and to what standard, and to make sure that this is clear and agreed before staff get to work.

∎ Understand what motivates staff in different roles

> Motivators for staff engagement in necessary change for learning and teaching can be:
> ∎ intrinsic (e.g. knowing that improving a practice will help retain students who are first in their family at university to graduation and, as a consequence, will dramatically improve their life opportunities; having the satisfaction of seeing students being enthusiastic about their learning)
>
>   or
> ∎ extrinsic (e.g. seeing that, if the quality of a program does not improve, it may have to close with a consequent threat of redundancies; knowing that an external university audit is about to occur; receiving praise, rewards, bonuses for a job well done or censure for poor performance).
>
> Furthermore, the key effectiveness indicators for different learning and teaching roles help shape the priorities of the individuals who occupy them. Effective leaders 'read' what mix of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators are likely to work with particular people and 'match' an appropriate strategy.

∎ Recognise that 'culture counts'

> *None of us is as smart as all of us.*
>
> (Japanese proverb)
>
> Leaders can shape culture ('how we do things around here') by modelling the behaviours that count, by actively reinforcing them in others and actively discouraging negative behaviours. The culture that this and other studies repeatedly have found works best (Appendix Three) is collaborative, problem not individual focused, optimistic, efficient, concentrated on student outcomes and is reciprocal. Meetings with no outcome, micro-politics, needless bureaucracy are actively discouraged.
>
> It is particularly important for academic leaders to recognise that the top ranking items for individual leadership capability are identical to the values that pervade a positive, change capable culture and, for that matter, a productive classroom. In this way individual and organisational capability are intimately connected.
>
> As the following senior academic leaders noted at the national workshops:
>
>> Culture is directly influenced and can be changed by the kind of leadership we have.
>>
>> The most challenging part of the leadership role for all levels seems to be dealing with the internal environment of the university, not the external. And here there seems to be a degree of 'learned helplessness' - leaders of higher education in Australia seem to perceive that they can't make significant changes in HE in this country. We need more people saying 'why don't we' and fewer saying 'why don't you'.
>>
>> It is clear how important modelling is-in teaching, leading, parenting, everything.

- Use teams to test, refine and scale-up changes

As change is a learning (and unlearning) experience for all concerned, it is important for the academic leader to apply the key lessons on what engages adults (including university students) in productive learning. This means learning how to make a desired change work by first undertaking it under controlled conditions, by adapting proven approaches from elsewhere if these are available. It involves selecting carefully the right team to undertake this work and having in place clear mechanisms for assessing what is and is not working and refining the change in the light of this feedback, before scaling it up. This approach will generate a proven solution in the unique context of the faculty and university and a set of staff that have made it work; these people can then assist others in a practical way to adopt and modify the development in other parts of the institution.

- Become deft and more considered in calling and running 'meetings'

One of the recurring areas of concern in both the qualitative data and at the national workshops was the time wasted attending meetings that did not have productive outcomes; meetings that did not, for example, demonstrably improve the quality of the student experience at the university or were poorly formulated and chaired.

Strategies suggested at the national workshops to address this issue and, thereby, give people more 'room to lead' included using telephone conferences rather than having travel to and from face-to-face meetings as the default; first asking if a group meeting was the best way to achieve the outcome desired; and when it was, to provide clear evidence on the issue to be decided and proposed courses of action in advance so that meeting focuses on outcomes and action not the ad hoc input of ideas or unsubstantiated personal anecdote. It must be emphasised that meetings and collegiality were strongly endorsed by both the online survey respondents and the participants at the national workshops-it was the uncontingent and unstrategic use of meetings that was seen to create the problem.

As one senior leader at the national workshops concluded:

We need to address the poor design in our organisation - there are, indeed, too many pointless meetings - rather than just go along with this we need to actively address the issue - because of the waste of time.

- Tell all staff what really counts

It is especially important, as this study has demonstrated, that the line staff who will ultimately make a desired change work (or fail to engage with it) are kept 'in the loop'. This requires the senior learning and teaching leaders to be clear themselves on the three or four key directions to be pursued and to reinforce consistently that action in these areas is what is of priority.

As one of the senior leaders at the national workshops said when drawing out the key implications of the study for his work:

I realise now how important it is for me to communicate my vision and priorities as a leader—more often, more widely and more persuasively.

When participants at the national workshops were asked to identify one key thing they would do to action the study's results, a large number indicated that they would seek to apply the above practical strategies that, at the workshop, were summarised in a slide headed: 'Handling the key challenges of academic leadership'. The following comments were typical:

> I intend to conscientiously apply the handling the key challenges slide-I already engage in the first four; now I will focus in on meetings and understanding staff motivation.
>
> I intend to engage with resistors more and work with them in a more emotionally intelligent way.
>
> Listen, link and lead is a key insight.
>
> For me the priority is now to evaluate and reprioritise meetings.
>
> Build this into our foundations courses for new academics and Grad Cert of tertiary teaching to see the beginnings of leadership addressed at the outset.

Use of the results to support existing academic leaders

When participants at the national and international workshops were asked to list one key insight they had gained from the discussion of the study's findings, a large number noted how supportive it had been to find that what they thought was something idiosyncratic was, in fact, commonly experienced.

The following comments from participants are typical:

> I now realise that I am not alone. I now know that other leaders in learning and teaching struggle with the same issues.
>
> The great insight for me is into the commonalities that most universities have with respect to leadership. I'd not fully appreciated that my university's 'issues' were so widespread.
>
> That I'm actually doing a reasonable job and using (without knowing) effective strategies.
>
> We are all in this together and can address the challenges.
>
> I guess I am surprised at how much I share in my beliefs and actions with others. As an individual, I am now aware that I am actually part of a community.
>
> It is affirming to see the relevance of personal qualities to the task of higher education leadership. Leadership is too often considered in a solely intellectual way.
>
> What surprised me is the commonality of the challenges faced across the sector.
>
> That the difficulties, complexities and manifestations of 'leaders' in universities have now been properly researched and acknowledged.
>
> It helped us see that what we thought was unique to us is, in fact, common. I liked the way you have shone light on what is actually going on and is being experienced by us all.
>
> It was both interesting and validating to hear that other program directors feel the same way as me. Sometimes one feels isolated and you begin to think that you are the only one having difficulties or experiencing issues like the ones identified in this study.
>
> Use the slide that identifies the top ranking leadership capabilities every day.

It is recommended, therefore, that the key findings, as outlined in the study's executive summary, be made available to all new academic leaders as part of their orientation program, along with the practical leadership 'tips' listed in the 'Handling the Challenges' slide and discussed above.

Refocus leadership succession planning strategies and reshape selection procedures

This was a recurring observation from participants at the national and international workshops when invited to identify one key implication of the study for them and their university.

The following comments from senior academics at these workshops were typical:

A key insight for me is that the top ranking capabilities for our leaders are not used to select staff. Academics are rarely selected for their ability to build teams, work with diversity or their interpersonal skills—yet these are so fundamental to success.

The top ranking capabilities that arise from the study do not necessarily align with our employment practices, nor with our espoused graduate attributes.

How different the leadership qualities that have emerged are from what is focused on in our various leadership position descriptions and performance management schemes.

We need ways of testing leadership capabilities and potential that go beyond interviews and the use of referee's reports. We also need internal systems for monitoring leaders and improving their leadership capabilities.

This study gives us an evidence base for moving forward on leadership selection, development and performance management in a more focused fashion.

If we were purchasing a piece of equipment worth a million dollars (the cost of some leaders) more effort would be given to deciding what to invest in than reading a tender document (job application), asking around and having a 40 minute interview. Yet this can be what happens as we select new leaders. The cost of a bad appointment is not just the money—the cost flows through to the morale and productivity of many other staff.

We have recognised the importance of 'generic capabilities' for our students but this is not mirrored for staff-we don't select or reward staff for their emotional intelligence.

Development and demonstrable application of emotional intelligence is critical beyond all else in being a successful leader. The key question is: how do we select our leaders who have this or develop this in our future leaders, given that so much of this occurs on the job and through informal mechanisms?

Environmental barriers to academic leadership include managerialism and the top down selection of managers who may be chosen because they agree with superiors rather than for their ability to inspire staff.

The need for succession planning is now.

Leadership needs to be emphasised more—including in PDs and performance management. The best leaders are judged by the number of good leaders they leave behind.

Improving the status of learning and teaching is the key to getting the right people to volunteer to be considered for a future L&T leadership role—this is a key challenge, given the succession crisis that is now upon us.

Participants at the Canadian workshops on the study's results emphasised the importance of making sure that the capabilities that count are given central focus in selecting leaders and that, at times,

people who have a strong individual research record will not always make a great leader. The following comments are indicative:

> The good cook doesn't always make a great maitre de.
>
> Hockey stars rarely make good coaches—they have spent their career thinking about how to make themselves best, not others.

Summary

The data on academic leadership capabilities generated by the study and discussed in this chapter, when combined with the outcomes from Chapter Three, have profoundly important implications for what is given focus as the sector seeks to identify and select a new generation of leaders, monitor their performance, shape their roles and help them develop their capabilities.

As indicated earlier, there is evidence that current approaches to leadership development may not be focusing on the capabilities that count and may not be applying key lessons on how adults learn in their design and delivery. It is to this final aspect of our study – learning academic leadership – that we now turn.

05

Learning Leadership

> Simply put, most forms of inservice training are not designed to provide the ongoing, interactive, cumulative learning necessary to develop new conceptions, skills and behaviour. Failure to realise that there is a need for inservice work during implementation is a common problem.
>
> Fullan, M. (1982: 66)

In this chapter the question of how our academic leaders prefer to learn and develop their capabilities and what they want their leadership development to focus upon is explored.

The key findings summarised below confirm that the comment made by Fullan some 25 years ago still holds. They confirm that the same flexible, responsive, role-specific, practice-oriented and just-in-time, just-for-me learning methods that we are advocating for use with higher education students in order to engage them in productive learning and retain them apply just as well to learning leadership in higher education. This has profound implications for a full-scale review of current, workshop-based approaches to leadership training and inservice education in higher education. It also indicates that, if we want our learning and teaching leaders to be strong advocates for these new approaches to student learning in higher education, they need to have experienced what is intended for themselves.

The existing literature on academic leadership development and learning

Bensimon's (1989) observation almost 20 years ago that there is little robust research on how people 'learn leadership' in universities still holds.

Huntley-Moore and Panter (2003) report being able to find little practical guidance on effective approaches to leadership development or how it might best be implemented. Bass (1985, 1998) notes that academic leadership is often treated as a general topic across disciplines and that the development of leadership skills in the context of the institution or role in which it is practiced is

typically overlooked. Debowski and Blake (2004) found that leadership development for learning and teaching in universities is generally not well recognised, understood or supported. Nor were specific programs for particular leadership roles like Head of School common. Aziz et al. (2005) and Montez (2003) found, in their studies, that leadership development as well as selection is 'ad hoc', and Debowski and Blake (2004) and Yielder and Colding (2004) concluded that the programs they identified inadequately addressed academic leadership needs.

Gmelch's study of Department Chairs found that most took up their role with no prior administrative experience or pre-service leadership training (Gmelch and Miskin, 1993; Gmelch, 2000). In a more recent review Gmelch (2002) found that only 3% of over 2000 academic leaders surveyed in US national studies between 1990-2000 had received any type of leadership preparation. Deem (2001) and Middlehurst and Garrett (2002) found somewhat more promising rates in the UK—indicating that a third of the academic leaders in their surveys reported receiving some formal training, but few reported receiving adequate feedback on their role. Montez (2003) found that such people were either 'brought up' from the faculty ranks or were 'brought in' from disciplines outside the academy (e.g. business, law or the ministry).

Middlehurst and Garrett (2002: 30) in their UK study of the development of senior academic leaders and managers concluded that:

> There is a clear need for greater levels of engagement in leadership and management development in UK higher education. This need is recognised at several levels: by senior managers themselves, by those responsible for staff development, and by external commentators. However, this need has not yet been translated into adequate levels of provision or investment.

The UK Leadership Foundation for Higher Education is now addressing this issue.

Wolverton et al. (2005) interviewed academic Deans, Provosts and Department Chairs and undertook an email survey to identify what would be relevant in a leadership development program for their particular role. They identified three key areas:

- conceptual understandings of carrying out academic leadership in their institutional context;
- skill development for performance; and
- reflection to enable them to learn from past experience.

These key areas were explored over a sustained period of 12 months using a range of interactive learning modes including discussion, self-assessment and observation tasks of what participants perceived as 'effective and ineffective' chair practice. Journals were used to record what emerged and participants would normally interact in their day-to-day work, meeting in pairs at a time convenient to them to discuss their observations and course material.

Although there is only limited empirical evidence on what engages academic leaders in productive learning there is a strong literature from other areas that can be used to guide the development of academic leadership learning programs. This includes research on adult learning, including professional learning (Foley, 2000; Tough, 1977), and research on higher education student learning (Scott, 2006).

This research consistently shows that the most effective learning programs are ongoing, relevant, focused on 'real world' dilemmas and problems common to a particular role; that they involve active learning, are peer supported by people in the same role, and are informed by an overall diagnostic

framework that enables people to make sense of what is happening and to learn through reflection on experience and assessing the consequences of their actions. The work of Alan Tough (1977) on adult learning projects around the world is especially significant as it indicates that the most productive source of learning is having just-in-time, just-for-me and convenient access to a 'fellow traveller' in the same role but further down the same learning (i.e. change) path with whom to compare tactics. This perspective sees learning as taking place not off the job in a self-contained workshop run by a generalist but on the job through reflection in action and on experience and having ready access to the specific expertise and insight of people who are also practitioners in the same area. Learning and action to address an experienced problem are, therefore, intertwined.

The same findings are repeatedly found when professional development programs for leaders in other sectors of education are reviewed (Fullan, 2001). What works best is reflected in studies of how successful teachers learn, which show the key role played by the local leader in this process. For example, a recent meta-analysis of studies of productive leadership in school education and successful instructional change concludes:

> With student background factors controlled, the more that teachers report their ... leaders ... to be active participants in teacher learning and development, the higher the student outcomes ... Principals were significantly more likely to be nominated as a source of advice in high achieving schools.
>
> Robinson et al. (2008: 12-13)

This notion of the leader as a teaching and learning resource for their staff is a key insight that has been confirmed by the findings in the current study.

A recent UK study by Middlehurst and Garret (2002) provides some data that aligns with the above observations:

> Certain principles to underpin good practice can be identified through the various sources of data collected. These include: extensive and ongoing consultations to support commitment to and the design of programmes, a balance between institutional structuring and individual choice of activities, variety in the scope of opportunities available with an emphasis on 'structured learning', integration of activities with roles, career-stages and work activities, well focused and targeted activities with a clear purpose and outcomes that are evaluated at several levels.

As one of the respondents to the current survey noted:

> I am sick of sitting in workshops and suffering 'death by PowerPoint' from someone who is spouting a first year management text book on leadership and change at me without any experience in or connection to my daily reality.

Ensuring academic leadership development and learning programs are relevant

As the 513 respondents rated the relative importance of the various items that make up the study's leadership capability framework they were also asked to identify the extent to which their leadership development programs to date had focused on each of the aspects of capability they rated as most important (1 – low to 5 – high).

On average, the results indicate that only a moderate amount of professional development has been devoted to enhancing the capabilities that respondents identify as being the most telling for effective leadership. The results presented in Figure 13 show that there is a modest amount of variation across roles, but that the role variations are consistent across the areas of capability. Responses tend to be lowest for Associate Deans, and highest for PVCs and DVCs, particularly in the areas of competency and cognitive capability. Such results are helpful, because they indicate the extent to which leadership development activities are perceived to be relevant by focusing on the capabilities identified by the experienced leaders themselves as counting most for effective performance.
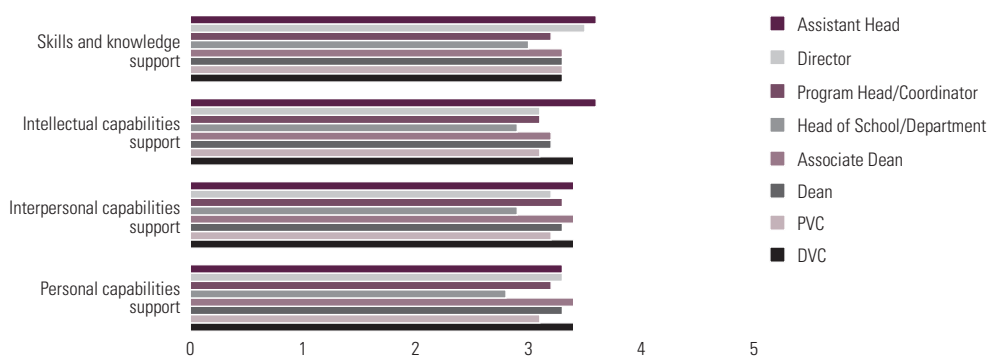
Figure 13 Focus of prior leadership development

As respondents rated the criteria they use to judge that they are effectively performing their role (Tables 12 & 13, Chapter Three) they were also asked to rate the extent to which improvement in each effectiveness criterion was a personal priority (1 – low to 5 – high).

These 25 items were formed into the same five scales as for the markers themselves. The average results on these scales are shown in Figure 14. The results provide information that can again be used to enhance the relevance of leadership learning activities.

As with perceptions of the criteria for leadership effectiveness, Figure 14 shows that it is in the area of implementation that leaders provided the highest responses. That is, leaders reported that improvement in their capacity to bring change successfully into practice is their highest priority for professional development and personal improvement. This is a very important finding and confirms the overall conclusions of the study. It implies that a key focus, going forward, is to concentrate on building leaders' capability in this area as a prerequisite to building organisational capacity for better managing the change pressures identified in Chapter Two. As participants at the national forum on the study's results observed:

Directors of Learning and Teaching, Associate Deans and Deans provided the highest ratings for this area. In terms of improving financial performance, the highest ratings were provided by Deans. Variation among roles was more muted for the other three improvement areas, although PVCs reported a lesser need to improve their capacity to enhance recognition and reputation for their area of responsibility, and for improving their personal and interpersonal areas of performance.
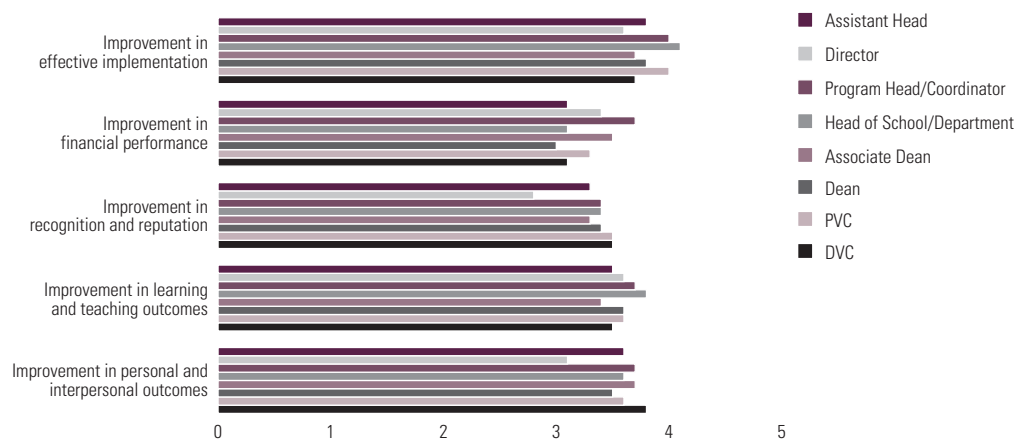
Figure 14 Relevant areas of focus in future development activities

Optimum ways to assist the learning of academic leaders

The study reviewed extensively the adult learning and professional development literature (Tough, 1977; Foley, 2000), recent research on productive learning in higher education (Scott, 2006), and drew upon a parallel study of leadership learning in school education (Scott, 2003), along with 20 years' experience in designing, delivering and reviewing university education courses and key works like that of Ramsden (1998), to develop an academic leadership learning schedule (Table 20). This is comprised of 20 items grouped into three subscales: Self-managed learning; practice-based learning; and formal leadership development experiences.

Table 20 Approaches to academic leadership development & learning

Scale	Item
Self-managed Learning	Ad hoc conversations about work with people in similar roles
	Participating in peer networks within the University
	Participating in peer networks beyond the University
	Undertaking self-guided reading on leadership
	Accessing leadership information on the internet
	Involvement in professional leadership groups or associations
Practice-based Learning	Being involved in informal mentoring/coaching
	Being involved in formal mentoring/coaching programs
	Undertaking work-placements or exchanges
	Participating in leadership development programs which are custom-tailored to your needs
	Study of 'real-life' workplace problems
	Undertaking site visits to other institutions or agencies
	Learning 'on-the-job'
Formal Leadership Development	Participating in 360-degree feedback reviews based on known leadership capabilities
	Participating in higher education leadership seminars
	Completing formal leadership programs provided by your university
	Completing formal leadership programs given by external providers
	Attending learning and teaching conferences
	Completing a tertiary qualification relevant to leadership
	Participating in annual performance reviews

In the study's online survey the 513 respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness of each of the above learning approaches in assisting their development as an academic leader (1 – low to 5 – high). The results, sorted by role, are shown in Figure 15. In general, a difference of 0.5 on the five-point scale is likely to be 'statistically significant'. Such differences may or may not be considered educationally, organisationally or managerially relevant. The standard deviations of these scores lay around 1.0, meaning that a difference between 0.3 and 0.5 may be a meaningful effect.

These results show that most leaders express a preference for practice-based learning, followed by self-managed learning, and finally formal development activities. The relatively low ratings for the more formal development activities may be due to their poor conception not their intrinsic worth. This issue requires further exploration. There is a degree of variation across the roles. Compared with other roles, Directors and DVCs, for instance, show a slightly higher preference for formal development activities. PVCs and DVCs provide slightly lower responses to the practice-based learning and self-managed learning domains.

Figure 15 Preferred approaches to leadership development & learning by role

Figure 16 below shows the mean ratings overall for the specific approaches to leadership learning and development identified in Table 20. It shows that learning on-the-job is the most preferred strategy for acquiring and developing the capabilities required for effective leadership. Undertaking work placements and learning from the internet both received quite low ratings. The following six approaches interact with each other and were endorsed in the survey and at the review workshops as having at least a medium level of effectiveness in helping to develop leadership capability:

- learning on-the-job;
- ad hoc conversations about work with people in similar roles;
- participating in peer networks within the university;
- being involved in informal mentoring/coaching;
- study of real-life workplace problems; and
- participating in peer networks beyond the university.
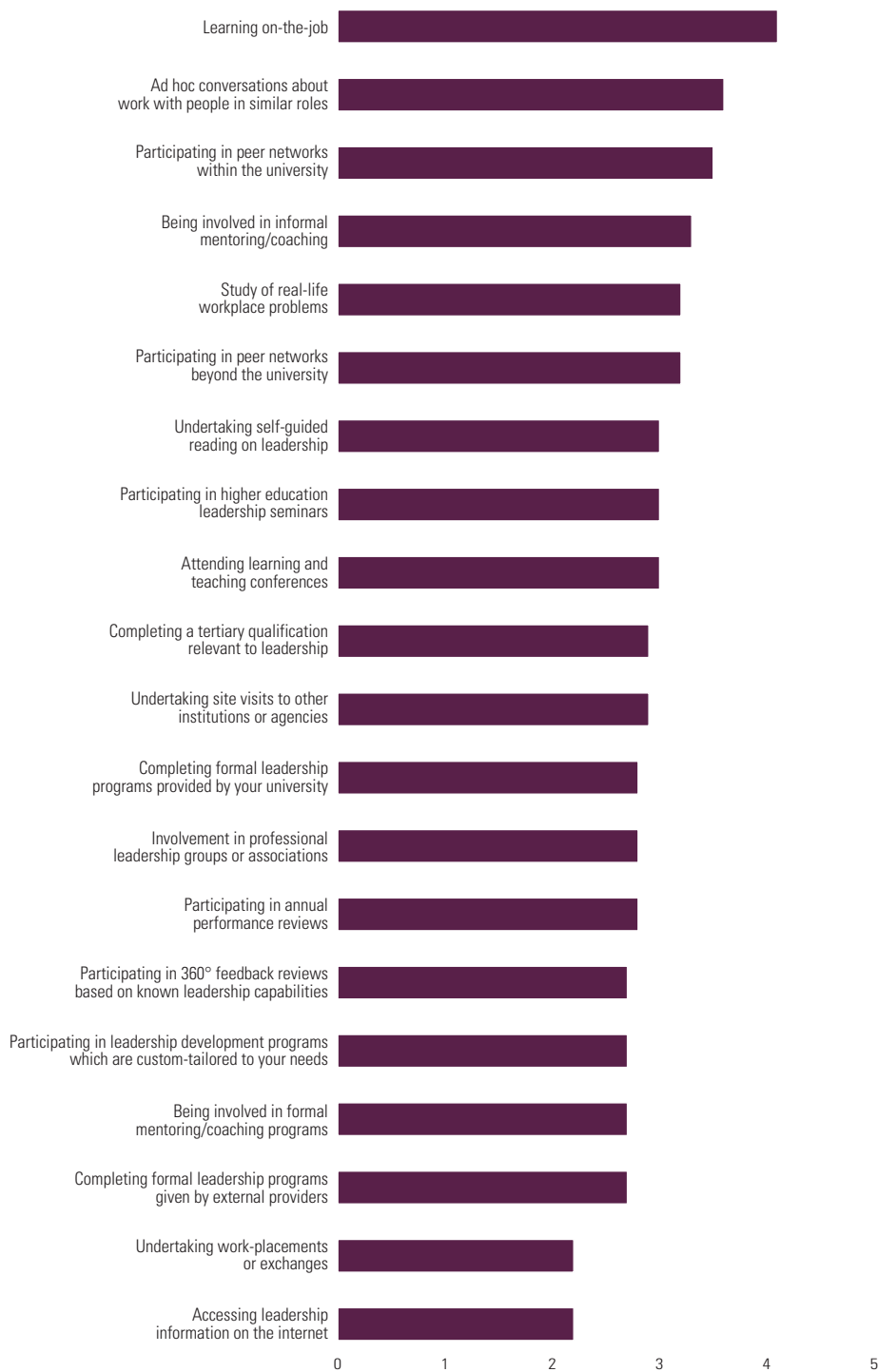
Figure 16 Preferred approaches to leadership development overall

While the differences are modest, it is interesting to review the influence that a leader's role has on their preferences for specific forms of professional learning. Figure 17 shows that DVCs and PVCs prefer more formal forms of development, quite contrary to those preferred by Assistant Heads. The preference for learning on-the-job is, however, generally sustained across most roles.
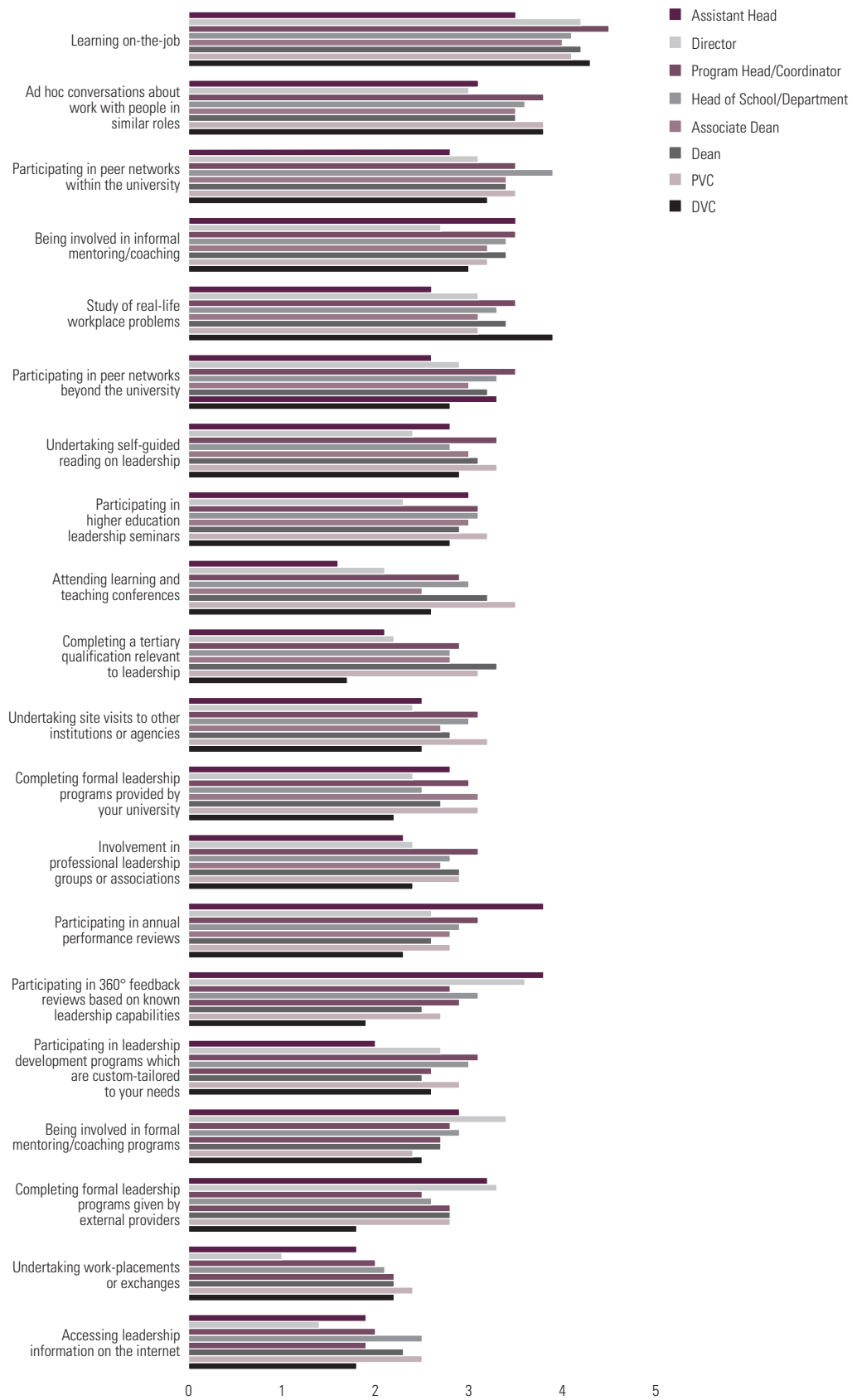
Figure 17 Specific leadership learning preferences by role

Legend:
- ■ Assistant Head
- ■ Director
- ■ Program Head/Coordinator
- ■ Head of School/Department
- ■ Associate Dean
- ■ Dean
- ■ PVC
- ■ DVC

Categories (top to bottom):
- Learning on-the-job
- Ad hoc conversations about work with people in similar roles
- Participating in peer networks within the university
- Being involved in informal mentoring/coaching
- Study of real-life workplace problems
- Participating in peer networks beyond the university
- Undertaking self-guided reading on leadership
- Participating in higher education leadership seminars
- Attending learning and teaching conferences
- Completing a tertiary qualification relevant to leadership
- Undertaking site visits to other institutions or agencies
- Completing formal leadership programs provided by your university
- Involvement in professional leadership groups or associations
- Participating in annual performance reviews
- Participating in 360° feedback reviews based on known leadership capabilities
- Participating in leadership development programs which are custom-tailored to your needs
- Being involved in formal mentoring/coaching programs
- Completing formal leadership programs given by external providers
- Undertaking work-placements or exchanges
- Accessing leadership information on the internet

Consistent with the quantitative results, the open-ended responses reveal that leaders are very clear about what features they like and do not like in professional learning for leadership. Table 21 summarises the key trends in these comments.

Table 21 Qualitative data on leadership development preferences

Critical features of effective leadership development programs	Critical features of unsatisfactory effective leadership development programs
■ Learning by doing ■ Learning from experiences ■ Learning through mentoring	■ Too generic ■ Ill-timed for one's particular leadership issue ■ Routine ■ Un-related to the work of a particular leadership role ■ Delivered by people with no understanding of the higher education system ■ Focused on the 'what' but not the 'how' of leadership-theoretical at the expense of practical application

Comparison with other studies of academic leaders' learning preferences

The study's findings on learning leadership in universities generally align with those from a range of parallel investigations.

In terms of preferred learning methods they align, for example, with recent work by the UK Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (2006) on effective approaches:

i.   Action and reflection;

ii.   Observation and analysis;

iii. Engaging with networks;

iv.   Filling in specific 'skills' gaps;

v.   Thinking 'outside the box' (cross sector and international);

vi.   Being offered both challenge and support;

vii. Undertaking challenging assignments and projects;

viii. Finding 'space' to reflect.

In terms of focus they align generally with the LFHE (2006) findings on the key development priorities for UK academic leaders:

i. Succession planning-selecting and nurturing leadership talent;
ii. Market positioning;
iii. Coping with change;
iv. Developing productive teams;
v. Leadership collaborations, partnerships and alliances;
vi. Middle management development;
vii. Managing the evolving governance context;
viii. Leading research and teaching;
ix. Managing diversity.

These UK findings are similar to those emerging from research by Higher Education South Africa with 100 leaders in 21 universities on their development needs (top 10 in rank order):

i. Strategic and operational planning;
ii. Leadership skills;
iii. Quality management;
iv. Performance management;
v. Team management;
vi. Finance management;
vii. Managing change;
viii. People management;
ix. Conflict management;
x. Project skills.

There is also some alignment with the research of Aziz et al. (2005) on the specific training needs for Department Chairs in US universities, where the top priorities were (in rank order, highest first):

i. Ability to deal with and provide feedback for unsatisfactory faculty;
ii. Knowledge of internal and external sources of funds and associated policies & procedures;
iii. Skill in reducing, resolving, and preventing conflict among faculty members, including management of areas like sexual harassment;
iv. Skill in adopting different leadership styles to fit varying situations.

Implications and recommendations

> This study suggests that leaders are seeking opportunities to learn from others and share experiences in informal rather than formal ways.
>
> (National workshop participant)
>
> Empirical evidence implies that it is the manner in which management and leadership development is implemented that is most important, with the greatest effect when it is integrated in a consistent manner alongside other management and HRM practices.
>
> Gosling, J. (2006)

Not only is there a need to review academic leadership position descriptions at every level for their relevance using the study's data on role focus, effectiveness criteria and the capabilities that count; the findings in this chapter indicate that there is an equal need to recast the support and leadership learning approaches intended to develop leaders using the findings in this chapter as an explicit set of checkpoints.

These findings were assessed in detail at the study's national and international workshops and the following were the recurring observations and recommendations made by the 490 participants:

We need to 'practice what we preach'

It was recommended that the way in which leadership learning programs are designed and delivered should model what universities are advocating their staff do as they seek to engage higher education students in productive learning and retain them.

This means, said both the respondents and workshop participants, that leadership learning programs need to be more learner centred, that they need to focus on relevance and apply the wide range of active learning methods indicated in research like that identified in the analysis of 280,000 university student comments in the recent *CEQuery* project (Scott, 2006). It means that they have to be more just-in-time, just-for-me; more focused on learning by resolving real-world problems and dilemmas of daily practice as they arise; that they need to use peer support more directly and foster reflection on experience using the capability framework validated in the present study. Finally they need to be change focused. This, said respondents and participants, is a far cry from their current experiences, which tend to be more one-off, workshop based, generic and unfocused.

The following is a selection of the written comments made by the senior leaders at these workshops when they were invited to identify one key insight they had taken from the discussion of the study's results in the area of learning academic leadership:

> The environment must be conducive to those with leadership roles if they are to be effective ... Overall, my institution needs to develop a 'learning organisation' culture.
>
> New ways of communicating: googling, chat, blogs, SMS mean that much action can be generated outside formal meetings.
>
> It is clear that much leadership development is informally acquired.
>
> (Using) the retiring leaders as informal mentors to people who are just coming into the same role is something we intend to investigate.

Focus on the capabilities that count using case-based and problem-based learning

The study has produced some 500 case studies of the challenges commonly faced by leaders in all of the roles studied, along with suggestions on how these might be resolved. This provides a highly relevant resource for both new leaders taking up a particular role as well as for existing academic leaders.

As the following senior academics who attended the national workshops observed:

> We now have greater understanding of the real leadership development needs in higher education.
>
> Even baby boomer leaders like me have a lot to learn about leadership.
>
> Leadership development needs to be 'in context'.

Develop more targeted support networks for people in the same role

The AUQA commendation for the establishment of a Head of Programs network at one university was noted. This network, convened by the PVC (Learning and Teaching), was praised because it had proven to be a convenient and well regarded way for Heads of Program to assess the feasibility and relevance of changes proposed by 'the centre' and to identify the best way to ensure they were taken up locally. It had proven to be an efficient mechanism for identifying locally successful ways of addressing key changes that could be adapted for application in other locations across the university. And it had proven to be an ideal forum for informal learning and support around a common role and set of changes. The national workshop participants recommended that developments like this be further enhanced and expanded to other institutions.

Generally, it was recommended that support networks be established in particular for learning and teaching leaders in roles that do not control resources or staff directly but who must rely on influence and 'winning followership' (roles like Associate Dean L&T). The work of another ALTC leadership project that is doing this for the A/Dean role was noted (Southwell, Scoufis & Hunt, 2006). As participants at the study's national workshops suggested:

> Recognise the difference between people with line responsibility and those who operate only by 'influence'. Set up support groups for the 'influencers'.
>
> Establish a network of 'fellow travellers' in the same role-both formally (e.g. monthly chats) and informally (e.g. via email lists, discussion boards, web-based learning resources, readings and links).
>
> Achieve greater clarity from the top. Listen more to the bottom. I like the concept of listen, link then lead. It is a good way to learn together and integrate top-down and bottom-up approaches.
>
> Develop a support group for beginning leaders.
>
> Offer a mentoring program, especially for the recently promoted, using the data from this study on the capabilities that count most in the role concerned to provide focus.

Develop an online Leadership Evaluation and Development Resource (LEADR)

It was suggested that an ideal resource for the new leaders who will be replacing the existing leadership as the 'baby boomer' generation retires would be the ability to complete the same online survey as the 513 leaders in the present study. This was seen as being especially beneficial if new leaders could immediately compare their results with those provided by experienced leaders in the same role. It was suggested also that being able to access the case studies of the key challenges for each role and how the experienced leaders had addressed them at the same time would be useful.

This is one way to address the recommendation from respondents that learning should be just-in-time, just-for-me, focused on their particular role and not generic; and that convenient access to the insights gained by 'fellow travellers' in exactly the same role would be especially useful.

As one academic leader at the national workshops concluded:

> How leaders might be best supported to learn appears to be consistent with what we already know from research on effective teacher professional learning: that effective learning needs to be in the context of that person's daily work challenges, context etc. - also to be just in time, and tied to key workplace problems rather than externally determined and delivered - in this model learning is via action research rather than from one-off seminars.

Summary

This chapter has assessed the way in which the 513 academic leaders responding to the study's online survey prefer to learn and their existing experiences with leadership development programs. At the same time the most relevant areas for professional learning in each leadership role have been identified from the quantitative data on effectiveness and role focus, along with a detailed qualitative analysis of the key challenges faced by leaders in each role.

The key findings are summarised diagrammatically in Figure 18. This figure suggests that professional learning for academic leaders should follow an action learning cycle, involving an ongoing process that identifies the 'gaps' in one's capability using the leadership scales and dimensions confirmed in the present study, and then addresses these 'gaps' using a mixture of self-managed learning, practice-based learning and appropriately timed and linked formal leadership development. As this occurs the results can be monitored using effectiveness indicators like those identified in the study and the quality of what has emerged can be evaluated. Areas of good practice are retained, and those requiring further attention and new 'gaps' for development are re-addressed. In this way the cycle continues. The key is to see the process as not only being cyclical but as heading to somewhere significant by using the validated capability and focus scales identified in the current study. This notion was captured well by Francis Bacon when he observed: "We rise to great heights by a winding staircase".
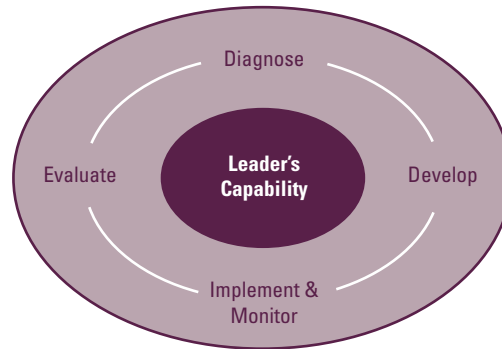
Formal leadership development	Practice-based learning	Self-managed & informal learning
▮ 360-degree programs ▮ higher education leadership seminars ▮ leadership programs run by university ▮ leadership programs run by external groups ▮ L&T conferences ▮ completion of a tertiary qualification in leadership	▮ mentoring ▮ 'shadowing' ▮ work placements ▮ exchanges ▮ custom-tailored learning programs ▮ study of real-life problems & cases ▮ visits ▮ learning 'on the job' ▮ secondments ▮ use of 'teaching fellows'	▮ peer group ▮ network in university ▮ network beyond university ▮ internet ▮ professional association

Figure 18 Learning Academic Leadership

Key recommendations emerging from this chapter include: the need to 'practice what we preach' by constructing leadership learning programs that model the approaches to learning that are now being advocated for use with higher education students; the need to focus more directly in these programs on the capabilities that count using case-based and problem-based learning situated in the context of each particular role; the need to develop more targeted support networks for people working in the same role; and the need to foster self-managed and just-in-time, just-for-me learning by making the online survey available to all new leaders for completion and comparison of their results with experienced practitioners in the same role across Australia.

06

Conclusion

> A recent survey of thousands of managers world-wide indicated that 'leadership' was the most important issue for their organisation's future.
>
> Council for Excellence in Management & Leadership (2001)
>
> Leadership is not about making clever decisions and doing bigger deals, least of all for personal gain. It is about energizing other people to make good decisions and do other things. In other words, it is about helping release the positive energy that exists naturally within people. Effective leadership inspires more than empowers; it connects more than controls; it demonstrates more than it decides. It does all this by engaging - itself above all and consequently others.
>
> Mintzberg (2004: 143)

As noted in the introduction to this report, the study set out to produce:

- a comprehensive evidence-based profile of effective academic leadership in different learning and teaching roles;

- an empirically-validated leadership capability framework;

- a suite of resources and strategies that institutions can use to develop leadership; and

- a methodology for linking the framework with leadership recruitment, development and review.

Because the Executive Summary at the head of this report identifies the major findings, implications and outcomes of this study against these objectives they will not be repeated here.

Instead, in this concluding chapter, a summary of the major conclusions and recommendations made by the 600 academic leaders who reviewed the study's findings and identified their implications at a series of national and international workshops is given. In this sense what follows helps assess the significance of the study in the eyes of those who are in a position to act on its findings. And it signals their intentions concerning which aspects of the study's findings they intend to implement.

It was uniformly agreed that, in the current context, effective change implementation is a central challenge facing Australian higher education and its leaders, and that developing organisational and individual capabilities to manage change is a key priority. There was wide recognition that change is not an event but a complex learning and unlearning process for all concerned and that academic leaders play a key role in supporting change-focused learning and in modifying the environment of universities to facilitate it. As the following senior leaders at the national workshops said when reviewing the key implications of the study for them:

> We need to rethink the 'cascade' approaches to planning and implementing change. This project shows that change is a learning process for all concerned and we need to apply what we know about this as we plan, set priorities and help people implement our key changes.
>
> I would appreciate that my university, as you have done in this project, would explicitly consult with and value the expertise, experience and perspective of professional as well as academic staff.
>
> It is now clear that we need to provide more 'space' for leaders to lead, rather than having them swamped with those management tasks and meetings that don't add demonstrable value.

The realities of the succession crisis for academic leadership were acknowledged and there was strong support for directly linking the findings of the study to a comprehensive revision of learning and teaching leadership position descriptions, selection and performance criteria and the processes that underpin them. And there was widespread recognition of the need to clarify the roles and responsibilities for different leadership positions and make explicit how they are to work together in a complementary way. The following comments from national workshop participants were typical:

> The best thing my university could do is to more accurately and clearly define my roles and responsibilities … We need much clearer PDs and KPIs for all these roles directly based on the study's findings—including key tasks, specific expected outcomes etc.
>
> What is needed is to develop a hierarchy of clear, consistent and complementary role descriptors focused on the activities, capabilities and competencies identified as so important in this study— rather than continue on using generic PDs associated with a title … It is role complementarity, relevance and focus that are now the key issues.
>
> A 'leadership succession crisis' may not accurately capture the real nature of the challenge we now face. The 'crisis' is not so much with the pool of potential leaders as with the quality of the processes used to identify talented people, then develop, groom and test them. In addition, disincentives for talented staff to engage have to be addressed: for example, the lower status of teaching c.f. research, including what really counts for promotion; the absence of clear career pathways; inadequate salaries; unclear processes for recognition; and confusion between roles and limited understanding of how they contribute to the core mission and business of a university.
>
> We need to think not about a 'selection process' but about putting in place a more systematic and systemic (sector wide) development of potential and talent … We need to cease seeing selection as an event—instead we need to see it as a process of identifying and developing a pool of the new generation of leaders over time using the findings of this study to give this process focus. In short, we need to 'grow our own'. This can be done by getting leaders with potential to, for example, undertake targeted secondments into the roles they may be suited for and to use the study's findings to make reflection on what happens focused and meaningful.

There was strong endorsement of a need to sharpen the efficiency and effectiveness of university operating systems and to reshape the culture of universities to make them as 'change capable' as possible. In reshaping universities to become more change capable there was widespread acknowledgement that this process will not just happen but must be modelled and led. The profile of a university that has these characteristics is given in Appendix Three. As senior academics at the national workshops emphasised:

> Reduce the expectations that every decision has to be ratified by so many others. Consultation should be for feedback but not so that it stifles progress.
>
> It is clear that a range of cultural and functional things need to be in place before people will engage in development.
>
> Authentic and evidence-based consultation is necessary from the most senior leaders-using a mix of top down and bottom up strategies. The current culture can be more about changing learning and teaching through 'legislation' and adoption of a standardised, 'one size fits all' model.

It was noted that the key aspects of personal, interpersonal and cognitive capability rated highest on importance for our learning and teaching leaders are exactly the same attributes that characterise organisations as change capable. A number of national workshop participants noted how this profile aligns with that of the 'learning organisation'. And, as Knight and Trowler (2000: 8) conclude:

> Learning organisations require learning managers: managers who are reflective practitioners and who apply their analytical skills to the important activity systems with which they are engaged, and develop with other staff appropriate, contextualised strategies for change … the progress of change is more likely to be successful when it follows the path of ready, fire, aim rather than the more usual ready, aim, fire.
>
> Fullan (1993: 31)

Others drew attention to the fact that, as Ramsden (1998) has noted, leaders have much in common with effective teachers:

> Leadership has many similarities to teaching-i.e. it has a focus on changing the way things are seen and done.
>
> A leader's role is not unlike what teachers do in the classroom. Classroom management is like organisational, team or staff management. Effective approaches to teaching and learning (the teacher) is like effective approaches to helping people learn to do agreed change and improve organisational outcomes (the learner).

The study's findings on shortfalls in current approaches to leadership learning were endorsed and action on its findings concerning the revision of such programs to align more with research on what engages all adults in productive learning was recommended. People at the national workshops identified the following areas where they intended to act in this regard:

> I intend to be much more concrete and directed. I've learned a lot from DVCs I've worked for, and I think some Heads of School and Associate Deans I've worked with have learnt a bit about leadership from working with me.
>
> Formal courses are not much use-but don't underestimate the deliberateness of on-the-job learning between leaders and their staff.
>
> I intend to pursue opportunities for leadership training for our Faculty Executive based on the specific findings in this study.
>
> With other leaders who attended I will prepare a summary of the day, which identifies key lessons and actions and then we will present these to groups and committees across the university.
>
> I intend to use the items listed on the slide "Handling the Key Challenges" and listen to the resistors more actively (a large number of participants identified actions around this area).
>
> I'm going to do lots more intentional modelling and I appreciate your input and ideas about dealing with uncertainty and resistance. I'm going to be more explicit about what is valuable and what is authentic.

Finally, a wide range of links to other higher education leadership studies have been made. The following is an example from a participant from a university where a national leadership centre is being established:

> We will look at this study's outcomes, messages and lessons in terms of a sector-wide leadership framework that is currently being developed at our university-we will make sure this study informs that work.

In addition to the national and international workshops, detailed dissemination of the study's findings has been successfully completed:

∎ at a national meeting of ALTC Leadership grantees in February 2007;

∎ with A/Deans and Teaching Fellows from UNSW, QUT and CDU in Sydney, Brisbane and Darwin from July-October 2007;

∎ at the national learning and teaching forum of the Innovative Research Universities in June 2007;

∎ at the 2007 ACODE-Educause Leadership Institute on 19-23August 2007;

∎ at the national CADAD Academic Development Forum in Melbourne on 25-26 October 2007; and

∎ at a national ALTC-convened forum on the results in February 2008.

Recommendations

On the basis of the feedback from the national and international workshops on the findings of this study and from the project's national steering committee it is recommended that:

1. Universities build the key findings concerning the priority areas of focus in each learning and teaching leadership role, along with the performance indicators and the capabilities identified as counting most for effective performance, into a revised set of leadership position descriptions, succession plans, selection procedures, development processes and performance management systems for each of the roles studied.

2. Cost-effective ways of assessing academic leadership potential and the capabilities that count, which go beyond standard interview selection procedures and the use of referees' reports, be explored in more detail. This would include investigating the use of a proposed online, role-specific Leadership Evaluation & Development Resource (LEADR) based on the findings of the current study.

3. The items in all current 360-degree performance systems for academic leaders be checked for validity and relative importance against the study's findings and that this process is differentiated by role.

4. Institutions and governments continue to highlight the importance of learning and teaching in order to attract a new generation of leaders to this critical role as the current, older generation of leaders leaves the system; and that the moral and financial importance of effective leadership of learning and teaching in universities to individuals, surrounding communities and the country be emphasised.

5. Leadership development and learning programs be reviewed and aligned with the findings of the study concerning how and what academic leaders prefer to learn, and that the fact that this is identical to the way in which higher education students wish to learn be made explicit. Where possible, programs should be underpinned by evidence-based insights into effective professional practice in the specific leadership roles involved. In doing this it is recommended that universities investigate ways of setting up learning networks for people in the same role, in particular Heads of School, A/Deans and Heads of Program.

6. The key lessons from research on effective change implementation in higher education be part of every orientation and development program for learning and teaching leadership.

7. Further research be undertaken on:
    a. The profile of Australia's academic leaders;
    b. The nature and impact of informal leadership in learning and teaching;
    c. The similarities and differences between the role of learning and teaching leaders and those in other roles-for example, leaders of research, university engagement and administrative services; and
    d. The leadership teams that have specifically achieved significant improvements in student outcomes, along the lines already used in studies of school effectiveness.

8. Universities Australia develop comprehensive, publicly available databases of senior leaders, with appropriate defining information on variations by role.

Products

The study has produced:

1. A validated capability framework for effective leadership in higher education. This includes an empirically and statistically determined set of higher education leadership capability domains and subscales.

2. A functional prototype of an online tool to enable future leaders in each role to complete the same survey as the 513 participants in the current study and compare their responses with these 'fellow travellers'.

3. A set of role-specific case studies and proven methods for handling the key challenges identified for each role.

4. A mechanism to revise not only leadership selection but its development in universities.

5. A set of quality checkpoints for ensuring academic leadership learning programs are productive and engaging.

6. A set of checkpoints for shaping and developing a change capable university culture, which bring together the study's key findings on this issue (Appendix Three).

7. A set of slides summarising the study's results, which have been field-tested nationally and internationally for clarity and relevance.

8. A tested methodology for efficiently gaining extensive sector feedback on and engagement with the outcomes of such studies.

Appendix One: The Study's Methodology

In this appendix a description of the study's staged methodology is given and the caveats on interpreting the results identified at the sector workshops are noted.

Phases of the study

The study has been implemented in six interlocked phases:

■ Face-to-face meetings and teleconferences with the National Steering Committee;

■ A series of 1:1 discussions between the project team and key players in 20 Australian universities to identify the sample for the empirical phase. This group of 20 people formed the Project Reference Group;

■ A detailed review of the research literature on leadership in higher education;

■ An empirical phase in which the 513 learning and teaching leaders identified by the 20 partner universities completed an online survey;

■ A series of meetings and workshops with an additional group of just under 500 leaders to discuss the results of the online survey in terms of their veracity, meaning and key implications for action; and

■ Production and refinement of the final report.

Project Oversight

This, as noted earlier, was undertaken by a National Steering Committee comprised of higher education leaders from a range of backgrounds.

The face-to-face meetings and teleconferences undertaken with the National Steering Committee as the project unfolded:

■ checked and refined its methodology;

■ validated and enhanced the online survey;

- critically appraised the results; and
- reviewed and improved the project report.

In addition the ALTC appointed a project evaluator-Emeritus Professor Brian Low. Professor Low was involved right from the outset and has ensured that the project has been effectively conceptualised, monitored and delivered.

Project Objectives

To produce:

- a comprehensive, evidence-based, profile of effective academic leadership in different learning and teaching roles;
- an empirically-validated leadership capability framework;
- a suite of resources and strategies that institutions can use to develop leadership; and
- a methodology for linking the framework with leadership recruitment, development and review.

(Original Grant Application: Section 2.4)

Literature review

Focus

The focus of the literature review was primarily on empirical studies specifically related to higher education.

Method

Key databases were searched, including the Australian Education Index (AEI), Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) and the British Education Index (BEI). A boundary of 10 years from 1996 to 2006 was set. This enabled the project team to identify major shifts in focus and findings over time, as well as enduring themes.

The project objectives informed the development of the key search terms for the literature review. These included: 'leadership', 'educational leadership', 'leadership qualities', 'administrator effectiveness', 'higher education', 'post-secondary education', 'universities', and 'empirical research'.

A number of other sources were used to complement the formal database searches:

- references suggested by the National Steering Committee and Reference Group members;
- benchmarking with the UK Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and Higher Education South Africa;
- input from other international higher education networks, like the Canadian Quality Network of Universities;
- analysis of reading lists from local and international higher education leadership courses;
- references from other ALTC leadership projects identified at the ALTC Leadership workshop in February 2007; and
- suggestions provided by participants at the project's national workshop forums.

Each of the studies identified was reviewed for its research focus, the quality of its methodology, sampling, the presence of a conceptual framework, its context and scope, and then its findings.

The empirical phase

Survey sample

All Australian universities were invited to take part in the study via the Universities Australia DVCs group. In addition, a number of universities that had expressed particular interest in the area were approached directly. Attention was given to ensuring that a representative range of Australian institutions and learning and teaching leadership roles were involved in the study's online leadership survey.

The universities that participated in the study were:

NSW:	University of Technology, Sydney; University of Western Sydney; Macquarie University; University of Newcastle; University of New England.
Queensland:	University of Queensland; Central Queensland University; Griffith University; James Cook University.
Victoria:	University of Melbourne; Swinburne University; Monash University; La Trobe University.
Western Australia:	University of Western Australia; Edith Cowan University; Curtin University of Technology.
Tasmania:	University of Tasmania.
ACT:	Australian National University; University of Canberra.
National:	Australian Catholic University.

The survey focused primarily on individuals with formal responsibility for leading learning and teaching in Australian universities—not just centrally but locally. The following were included in the sample: Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Pro Vice-Chancellors, Deans, Deputy and Associate Deans, Heads of School or Department, Heads of Program, Directors of Education Development Centres or their equivalent.

As no existing sampling frame existed for this population it was necessary to construct one from scratch. This involved asking members of the reference group to identify target leaders within their institution and then consulting websites to enhance these lists.

While learning and teaching play a central role in all Australian universities, identifying the people directly in charge of these activities is not a straightforward task. A few formal roles do exist that capture this role explicitly. Examples include Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) and Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching).

However, leadership of teaching and learning often forms part of a position that includes a range of other research, engagement and administrative responsibilities. While it may be possible to exclude

certain university leaders on the basis of their formal role – such as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) – the more subtle challenge in the present study involved defining those aspects of a broader portfolio that are specifically relevant to its focus. The study has addressed this challenge by identifying the contexts, tasks and capabilities that are specifically related to learning and teaching. These will vary between people, faculties, schools and institutions, and, as the study demonstrates, are not easily defined by a particular portfolio or position name.

The literature review had already alerted the team to some additional issues (e.g. Middlehurst & Garrett [2002] in their UK study had concluded "the population of managers in higher education [in the UK] is difficult to calculate"). For a start, a consolidated knowledge base of Australian higher education leaders is limited. Also, the literature showed that titles used in one university context do not necessarily map evenly or universally across to other leadership roles, even though they may share the same title. A further complexity for respondents and the research team was the forced choice selection of one role.

It is important to reiterate that the focus of the study was primarily on formal leadership positions in the learning and teaching area. This focus excluded from the study those individuals who may not occupy formal leadership positions but who enact it in their day-to-day work, along with those who lead research, engagement or key administrative areas. A focus on informal leadership was outside the funded capacity of this project. There is, however, a need for specific research on the area, ideally using the same methodology and framework as the present study so that the results can be meaningfully compared.

Ethics clearance for the study was provided by both ACER and UWS.

Survey design

The survey instrument used in the empirical phase of the study (Appendix Two) was delivered and completed online. It built upon a parallel instrument that had already been validated for leadership in school education (Scott, 2003) and in a range of studies of professional capability amongst successful graduates (Vescio, 2005).

A draft of the instrument was reviewed in detail by the National Steering Committee and against the higher education leadership literature. It was then modified in light of this. In particular, the section on specific learning and teaching skills and knowledge was considerably refined.

A context review was also conducted. This involved securing brief descriptive information on academic leadership development activities at the 20 institutions participating in the research. A round of interviews was conducted to probe and refine the draft capability framework in light of this information. A web-survey of relevant position descriptions from a selection of the participating universities was also undertaken.

The quantitative items in the survey focus on:
- the learning and teaching leaders' profile;
- the major area of focus in their role;
- the indicators they use to judge their effectiveness;
- the influences that most have an impact on their daily work;
- the capabilities necessary for successful performance as a learning and teaching leader; and

- the relative effectiveness of a range of formal and informal activities in developing these capabilities.

Nine open-ended questions are also included. These questions seek leaders' views on issues such as:

- which aspects of their role they find most and least satisfying;
- the major challenges they experience in the role and how they resolve them;
- what it is like being a leader in their role; and
- what they believe are the most effective methods for developing the capabilities of leaders in their situation.

The open-ended questions give leaders the opportunity to expand on issues raised by the survey items or to make comment on additional issues.

The survey is completed online using Teleform software. It was extensively field tested before distribution and is designed for completion in around 20 minutes, depending on the amount of open-text feedback provided.

Survey administration

The Project Reference Group (PRG) contact in each university personally invited each of their identified respondents to participate in the survey and explained its purpose and significance. A confirmatory note was then emailed to the respondent by the project's survey administrator with the URL for the online survey. This took place during October and November 2006. Three follow-up emails were sent by the project team at weekly intervals and each PRG contact undertook personal follow up as necessary.

Responses were received in confidence and were not linked with information in the sampling frame.

Data gathering was complete by early December 2006.

Response sample

The research team received responses from 513 learning and teaching leaders from 20 Australian universities. This reflected a response rate of around 41.3 per cent. The relatively high response rate and large number of open-ended comments provided makes this one of the largest empirical studies of learning and teaching leaders in higher education.

The response sample is relatively representative of the sector, taking into account the limited overall data on available higher education leadership.

Quantitative analysis

A range of methods were used to analyse the survey data. Validity and reliability checks were conducted on the capability and context scales to confirm content and face validity. The psychometrics helped confirm the precision of measurement and, importantly, the existence of the proposed constructs.

Statistical methods were used to explore and scale the survey data, to validate the items and scales, and to determine the nature and strength of patterns in response. To facilitate interpretation of results, the report presents summary means, ordinal ranks and variance-explained statistics.

The means are reported on the response scale included on the instrument. The variance-explained statistics are reported using a percentage metric. This modelling was undertaken in an exploratory fashion, given the limited amount of empirical research on higher education leadership and, hence, of explanatory models upon which to base the current analyses.

In summary, a series of independent regression analyses were conducted to expose the explanatory contribution of each factor on each of the scales. A large amount of data was collected and many analyses were conducted. Key analyses were converted into summary findings for interpretation and inclusion in this report. These provide a foundation of evidence upon which further research can be based.

Qualitative analysis

Initially, the open-ended responses were subjected to a close read by the team members. This assisted the team to become familiar with the respondent comments. The responses were then sorted and thematically analysed initially by role. They were then analysed independently by different members of the project team, using the study's conceptual framework for academic leadership as a guide. Comparisons with the quantitative findings were made. Insights were then pooled and validated by team members. The qualitative software program Nvivo7 assisted with this process. Collectively, these processes allowed the team to approach the data from multiple perspectives.

The approaches used by researchers such as Miles and Huberman (1994) and Grace (2002) were adopted to enhance the analysis process. This included a focus not just on thematic analyses but identification of the degree of emotion evident in what leaders wrote, how often they returned to a topic or theme, and how much they wrote on particular issues.

Comments used throughout the report are faithful to the overall stance of a leader for any given question. Generally, comments are included that reflect an overall pattern in responses on a particular issue. However, the team did not shy away from outlier comments because these may introduce points of contradiction, new ideas or ways of looking at an issue. Such spaces may provide opportunities for advancing our thinking and practice in academic leadership.

National & international reviews of the results

The results of the online survey were discussed in detail at a series of 4-hour workshops held across Australia from June to August 2007. These took place in Brisbane, Sydney, Hobart, Perth, Canberra and Melbourne. Some 400 people ranging from DVC to Head of Program and a wide range of HR and other senior university players attended these workshops.

Each workshop focused on the following:
- the study's need and aims;
- its methodology and caveats that might arise from it;
- The study's findings on
  - The nature of leadership in universities: analogies;
  - Major areas of focus in different leadership roles;

- – The most satisfying and challenging aspects of each role;
- – Key influences shaping leadership in universities;
- – How HE leaders judge their performance to be effective;
- – The capabilities that count; and
- – Learning leadership;

■ Importantly, participants were invited at the end of each workshop to write out:
- – One key insight the project team should keep in mind when writing the final report;
- – One key thing they believed their university should do to act on the results; and
- – One key step they intended to take to act on the results.

This feedback provided an additional and highly significant source of data for the study.

The data generated from this sector feedback phase has been used to ensure that the recommendations and key insights reflect accurately the collective views of a wide range of experienced leaders in Australian HE and not simply the views of the project team.

The results were also reviewed by the project's National Steering Committee and at other ALTC-funded leadership projects and workshops in 2007 and in early 2008. Specifically:

■ at a national meeting of ALTC Leadership grantees in February 2007;

■ with A/Deans and Teaching Fellows from UNSW, QUT and CDU in Sydney, Brisbane and Darwin from July-October 2007;

■ at the national Learning and Teaching forum of the Innovative Research Universities in June 2007;

■ at the 2007 ACODE-Educause Leadership Institute, 19-23 August 2007;

■ at the national CADAD Academic Development Forum in Melbourne, 25-26 October 2007; and

■ at a national ALTC-convened forum on the results in February 2008.

The findings have been further tested in a selection of university leadership development meetings. For example:

■ in a series of leadership development programs at the University of Western Sydney involving people in the following leadership roles:
- – A/Deans (n=20)
- – Heads of School (n=15)
- – Heads of Program (n=60)

■ in a leadership meeting held at Griffith University in November 2007 with 30 leaders ranging from the DVC, Deans, A/Deans, and Heads of School to the University's Learning and Teaching director and her staff and key HR personnel.

Internationally, the results have been reviewed at meetings or workshops with:

■ 30 senior university leaders at a meeting organised by Higher Education South Africa (November 2006);

■ the Vice-Presidents from 15 universities who are members of the Canadian Quality Network of Universities (29-30 November 2007 in Edmonton, Alberta);

- groups of leaders in a range of roles at:
  - The University of Toronto (January 2007)
  - The University of Alberta (December 2007)
- the Executive Director of the UK Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (December, 2006).

The feedback given at all of the above events has been recorded, placed into a detailed spreadsheet, and then sorted by the agenda for each workshop and analysed qualitatively.

Caveats

Participants in the national and international workshops and meetings on the results were invited to identify any caveats that should be borne in mind when interpreting the results of the online survey.

The following were noted and should be borne in mind when reading the results and conclusions drawn in the study:

In terms of the study's sampling methodology:

- We are unable to definitively say that the response sample for the online survey is representative of the sector as no sector-wide data is available. However, at the review workshops, the various sample sizes by role were seen to be appropriate and the response sample does generally align with the limited sector data available.
- The whole sector was invited to participate with 20 universities taking up the offer. There may be some inherent bias in this self-selection approach. However, in terms of university type, the sample is relatively representative.
- A number of respondents reported having to perform more than one of the roles surveyed. In responding to the survey they reported that they had selected the one that took most of their time and attention; the study does not, therefore, pick up the interactions between a number of roles being undertaken by the one person.
- Length of time in each role may be an influence in its own right; national workshop participants distinguished, for example, between being in 'the honeymoon' period and being at the end of one's time in a role.
- Restricting the focus to learning and teaching leaders did not allow the study to explore the similarity and differences between this role and others-e.g. leaders of research, administrative areas or university engagement. A subsequent study could undertake this sort of analysis.

In terms of the online survey:

- It is important to keep in mind that the online survey is self-report by leaders. The views of these leaders by colleagues were not canvassed as part of this study. However, it was found that the self-report results presented in Chapter Four do align well with other research on what line staff and other stakeholders look for in their academic leaders. The results were also found to align with the perceptions of the national workshop participants.
- When people complete an online survey this is typically done quickly, without time for considered reflection. A number of respondents and participants at the national workshops noted that they were being 'over-surveyed' at present.

- It was suggested at one national workshop that it would be interesting to follow up the people nominated to participate who did not respond.

- This study presents an overall snapshot-it could be complemented by a follow-up study that uses a more longitudinal, anthropological, individualised approach.

- When people rate an item their interpretation of what it means may vary; however, the meaning of key items was checked at the review workshops and participants identified consistently similar interpretations of what was being asked.

- It was noted that the survey is based on earlier leadership surveys used in different sectors of education. It was suggested that it would be important to show the extent to which it had been adjusted in advance to suit the distinctive context of higher education and the extent to which respondents validated the items by giving them all high importance ratings.

- Some frustration was expressed about the word limits set for the open text boxes-these respondents said they wanted to say more but were unable to.

- The focus on the positive as well as the negative in the survey was commended.

Compilation of the final project report

For each key project objective the report has, as noted earlier, produced a triangulated picture of what the literature says, what the respondents to the survey said and what the participants at the national and international workshops said in evaluating the veracity of the findings and identifying their implications.

This draft report was then circulated for review at a national forum on the project in February 2008 and for a final review and sign off by the project's National Steering Committee in April 2008.

Appendix 1 : The Study's Methodology

02

Appendix Two:
The Study's Online Survey Instrument

Introduction

This survey aims to identify the capabilities most important to effective practice for leaders of learning and teaching in Australian universities. The findings will help to ensure that the selection and development of current and future academic leaders focuses on what really counts for effective performance in their role. The research is funded by Australia's Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.

Your university is one of approximately 20 participating in the project and you have been nominated as being important to include in the survey. Participants include academic leaders in a range of roles, including DVCs, PVCs, Deans, Heads of Schools, Heads of Program and Directors of Learning and Teaching or their equivalent alongwith a sample of award winning teaching staff.

Once we have developed the preliminary findings, we will be inviting you to participate in a consultation workshop in early 2007. We will also be conducting follow-up interviews with a small sample of respondents. No individual or institution will be identified in any analysis or report.

Completing the survey

The survey should take about 35 minutes to complete online. Please do not shut down your computer, try to save your responses or close your web browser prior to submission or the data will be lost.

When you are happy with your responses, just click the "Submit" button on the final page of the survey.

If you have any technical difficulties in completing the survey, please contact Mr Harman Nagpal at h.nagpal@uws.edu.au or on 02 9678 7882.

Please contact Dr Hamish Coates at coatesh@acer.edu.au or on 03 9835 7487 if you have any non-technical questions about the survey.

Many thanks for your assistance with this important project. We are aware of the time pressures of a very busy work schedule and so are especially grateful for your participation.

Professor Geoff Scott
Project Director
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Quality)
University of Western Sydney

About you

Your sex

○ Female

○ Male

Your age

○ Under 36   ○ 56 - 65

○ 36 - 45   ○ Over 65

○ 46 - 55

Your main disciplinary background

○ Agriculture and Environmental Studies   ○ Law

○ Architecture and Building   ○ Management and Commerce

○ Education   ○ Natural and Physical Sciences

○ Engineering and Technology   ○ Society and Culture

○ Health   ○ Other: [_____]

○ Information Technology

Your university   (only to be used for statistical purposes and will not be referred to by name in the results)

○ Australian Catholic University   ○ Macquarie University   ○ University of Newcastle

○ Australian National University   ○ Monash University   ○ University of Queensland

○ Bond University   ○ Murdoch University   ○ University of Sydney

○ Central Queensland University   ○ Queensland University of Technology   ○ University of South Australia

○ Charles Darwin University   ○ RMIT University   ○ University of Southern Queensland

○ Charles Sturt University   ○ Southern Cross University   ○ University of Tasmania

○ Curtin University of Technology   ○ Swinburne University of Technology   ○ University of Technology Sydney

○ Deakin University   ○ University of Adelaide   ○ University of the Sunshine Coast

○ Edith Cowan University   ○ University of Ballarat   ○ University of Western Australia

○ Flinders University   ○ University of Canberra   ○ University of Western Sydney

○ Griffith University   ○ University of Melbourne   ○ University of Wollongong

○ James Cook University   ○ University of New England   ○ Victoria University

○ La Trobe University   ○ University of New South Wales

About your leadership roles

What is your current role?

O VC   O Assistant Dean

O DVC   O Head of School / Department

O PVC   O Program Head / Co-ordinator

O Dean   O Director

O Associate Dean O Other (please specify):

How many years have you held your current role?

O Under one year O 1 - 3 years O 4 - 6 years O 7 - 10 years O More than 10 years

Currently, how many staff report directly to you?

O 1 - 5 O 6 - 10 O 11 - 20 O 21 - 50 O more than 50

What was your role immediately prior to your current one?

O VC   O Assistant Dean

O DVC   O Head of School / Department

O PVC   O Program Head / Co-ordinator

O Dean   O Director

O Associate Dean O Other (please specify):

How many years were you in this prior role?

O 0 - 1 year O 2 - 5 years O 6 - 10 years O More than 10 years

Do you intend to apply for another higher education leadership role in the next five years? (you may select more than one response if necessary)

O No current intention O Assistant Dean

O VC   O Head of School / Department

O DVC   O Program Head / Co-ordinator

O PVC   O Director

O Dean   O Other (please specify):

O Associate Dean

Have you ever held a leadership role outside higher education?

O No

O Yes

If 'Yes', in what area(s)?

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Major areas of focus in your current role

How important do you believe each of the following areas or activities is to the delivery of your portfolio?

ITEMS	Importance of this area to the delivery of my portfolio				
	Low		Medium		High
Managing relationships with senior staff	O	O	O	O	O
Managing other staff	O	O	O	O	O
Staff development	O	O	O	O	O
Developing policy	O	O	O	O	O
Your own professional development	O	O	O	O	O
Reviewing people's performance	O	O	O	O	O
Marketing activities	O	O	O	O	O
Scholarly research	O	O	O	O	O
Developing learning programs	O	O	O	O	O
Preparing reports	O	O	O	O	O
Delivering presentations	O	O	O	O	O
Developing organisational processes	O	O	O	O	O
Reviewing teaching activities	O	O	O	O	O
Budget management	O	O	O	O	O
General administration	O	O	O	O	O
Responding to ad hoc requests	O	O	O	O	O
Dealing with complaints	O	O	O	O	O
Participating in meetings	O	O	O	O	O
Chairing meetings	O	O	O	O	O
Strategic planning	O	O	O	O	O
Identifying new opportunities	O	O	O	O	O
Working on student matters	O	O	O	O	O
Networking within the University	O	O	O	O	O
Liaising with external constituencies	O	O	O	O	O
Institutional research	O	O	O	O	O
Other (please specify):	O	O	O	O	O

What aspects of your current role do you find MOST satisfying?

What aspects of your current role do you find LEAST satisfying?

Judging effective performance in your current role

In your view, how important should each of the following indicators be as a criterion for judging effective performance in your current role? To what extent is improvement in each area a current priority for you?

Importance as a criterion for judging effectiveness in my role					ITEMS	Extent that improvement in this area is a personal priority					
Low	Medium			High		Not Applicable	Low		Medium		High
O	O	O	O	O	Securing competitive funds related to learning and teaching	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Increased student retention rates	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Achieving high quality graduate outcomes	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Achieving a positive financial outcome for your area of responsibility	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Achieving goals set for your own professional development	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Bringing innovative policies and practices into action	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Delivering successful team projects in learning and teaching	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Producing successful learning systems or infrastructures	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Winning learning and teaching awards and prizes	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Winning resources for your area of responsibility	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Delivering agreed tasks or projects on time and to specification	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Producing significant improvements in learning and teaching quality	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Meeting student load targets	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Receiving positive user feedback for your area of responsibility	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Having high levels of staff support	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Being invited to present to key groups on learning and teaching	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Improving student satisfaction ratings for learning and teaching	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Establishing a collegial working environment	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Successful implementation of new initiatives	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Enhanced representation of equity groups	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Achieving positive outcomes from external reviews of the area	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Producing future learning and teaching leaders	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Formative involvement of external stakeholders in your work	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Publishing refereed papers and reports on learning and teaching	O	O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O	Achieving a high profile for your area of responsibility	O	O	O	O	O	O

Overall, what analogy best describes what it is like to be in your current leadership role?

Being a leader in the learning and teaching area of my university is like .....

The influences shaping your role

Please rate the level of impact that each of the following has on your daily work.

ITEMS	Impact on my daily work				
	Low		Medium		High
Decreased government funding	O	O	O	O	O
Growing local competition	O	O	O	O	O
Growing international competition	O	O	O	O	O
Increased student complaints	O	O	O	O	O
Greater government reporting and scrutiny	O	O	O	O	O
Rapid changes in technology	O	O	O	O	O
Growing pressure to generate new income	O	O	O	O	O
Declining status of academic work	O	O	O	O	O
Increased focus on filling enrolment targets	O	O	O	O	O
Increased student diversity	O	O	O	O	O
Increasing student attrition rates	O	O	O	O	O
Growing risk of litigation	O	O	O	O	O
Finding and retaining high quality staff	O	O	O	O	O
Increasing responsibility to external groups and agencies	O	O	O	O	O
Increasing dependence on business and industry	O	O	O	O	O
Managing pressures for continuous change	O	O	O	O	O
Maintaining a specific institutional image	O	O	O	O	O
Handling unexpected events	O	O	O	O	O
Balancing work and family life	O	O	O	O	O
Dealing with local university cultures	O	O	O	O	O
Managing difficult staff	O	O	O	O	O
Clarifying strategic directions	O	O	O	O	O
Slow administrative processes	O	O	O	O	O
Other (please specify):	O	O	O	O	O

What has surprised you most about working in your current role?

Key challenges in your role

Briefly, what are the three most challenging aspects of your current role?

1.

2.

3.

A challenging situation

Think of a time since you took up your present role when you believe that your capabilities as a leader were most tested. Please outline the situation, explaining whether it was expected, how it came about and what you found most challenging about it. Then please note how you went about figuring out what to do and how well this worked.

Leadership capabilities

Personal capabilities

How important do you believe each of the following PERSONAL CAPABILITIES is for effective performance in your current role?

ITEMS	Importance for effective performance		
	Low	Medium	High
Admitting to and learning from my errors	O O O O O		
Understanding my personal strengths and limitations	O O O O O		
Being confident to take calculated risks	O O O O O		
Remaining calm under pressure or when things take an unexpected turn	O O O O O		
Deferring judgment and not jumping in too quickly to resolve a problem	O O O O O		
Having energy, passion and enthusiasm for learning and teaching	O O O O O		
Persevering when things are not working out as anticipated	O O O O O		
Wanting to achieve the best outcome possible	O O O O O		
Taking responsibility for program activities and outcomes	O O O O O		
Being willing to take a hard decision	O O O O O		
Pitching in and undertaking menial tasks when needed	O O O O O		
Maintaining a good work/life balance and keeping things in perspective	O O O O O		
Bouncing back from adversity	O O O O O		
Tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty	O O O O O		
Being true to one's personal values and ethics	O O O O O		
Other (please specify):	O O O O O		

Giving focus to these personal capabilities

ITEMS	Extent of focus		
	Low	Medium	High
To what extent has your leadership development to date focused on personal capabilities like those listed above?	O O O O O		
To what extent have leadership selection or promotion processes in which you have been involved focused on personal capabilities like those listed above?	O O O O O		

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Interpersonal capabilities

How important do you believe each of the following INTERPERSONAL CAPABILITIES is for effective performance in your current role?

ITEMS	Importance for effective performance				
	Low		Medium		High
Empathising and working productively with staff and other key players from a wide range of backgrounds	O	O	O	O	O
Influencing people's behaviour and decisions in effective ways	O	O	O	O	O
Empathising and working productively with students from a wide range of backgrounds	O	O	O	O	O
Listening to different points of view before coming to a decision	O	O	O	O	O
Developing and using networks of colleagues to solve key workplace problems	O	O	O	O	O
Understanding how the different groups that make up my university operate and influence different situations	O	O	O	O	O
Working with very senior people within and beyond my university without being intimidated	O	O	O	O	O
Giving and receiving constructive feedback to/from work colleagues and others	O	O	O	O	O
Motivating others to achieve positive outcomes	O	O	O	O	O
Developing and contributing positively to team-based programs	O	O	O	O	O
Working constructively with people who are 'resistors' or are over-enthusiastic	O	O	O	O	O
Being transparent and honest in dealings with others	O	O	O	O	O
Other (please specify):	O	O	O	O	O

Giving focus to these interpersonal capabilities

| ITEMS	Extent of focus				
	Low		Medium		High
To what extent has your leadership development to date focused on interpersonal capabilities like those listed above?	O	O	O	O	O
To what extent have leadership selection or promotion processes in which you have been involved focused on interpersonal capabilities like those listed above?	O	O	O	O	O

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Intellectual capabilities

How important do you believe each of the following INTELLECTUAL CAPABILITIES is for effective performance in your current role?

ITEMS	Importance for effective performance				
	Low		Medium		High
Seeing the best way to respond to a perplexing situation	O	O	O	O	O
Knowing that there is never a fixed set of steps for solving workplace problems	O	O	O	O	O
Identifying from a mass of information the core issue or opportunity in any situation	O	O	O	O	O
Thinking creatively and laterally	O	O	O	O	O
Having a clear, justified and achievable direction in my area of responsibility	O	O	O	O	O
Seeing and then acting on an opportunity for a new direction	O	O	O	O	O
Using previous experience to figure out what's going on when a current situation takes an unexpected turn	O	O	O	O	O
Diagnosing the underlying causes of a problem and taking appropriate action to address it	O	O	O	O	O
Tracing out and assessing the likely consequences of alternative courses of action	O	O	O	O	O
Adjusting a plan of action in response to problems that are identified during its implementation	O	O	O	O	O
Recognising how seemingly unconnected activities are linked	O	O	O	O	O
Setting and justifying priorities for my daily work	O	O	O	O	O
Recognising patterns in a complex situation	O	O	O	O	O
Making sense of and learning from experience	O	O	O	O	O
Other (please specify):	O	O	O	O	O

Giving focus to these intellectual capabilities

ITEMS	Extent of focus				
	Low		Medium		High
To what extent has your leadership development to date focused on intellectual capabilities like those listed above?	O	O	O	O	O
To what extent have leadership selection or promotion processes in which you have been involved focused on intellectual capabilities like those listed above?	O	O	O	O	O

Skills and knowledge

How important do you believe each of the following **SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE** is for effective performance in your current role?

ITEMS	Importance for effective performance				
	Low		Medium		High
Having a high level of up-to-date knowledge of what engages university students in productive learning	O	O	O	O	O
Understanding how to develop an effective higher education learning program	O	O	O	O	O
Understanding how to implement successfully a new higher education program	O	O	O	O	O
Understanding how to design and conduct an evaluation of a higher education learning program	O	O	O	O	O
Knowing how to identify and disseminate good learning and management practice across the unit or university	O	O	O	O	O
Being on top of current developments in learning and teaching	O	O	O	O	O
Understanding how universities operate	O	O	O	O	O
Understanding the role of risk management and litigation in my work	O	O	O	O	O
Understanding of industrial relations issues and processes as they apply to higher education	O	O	O	O	O
Being able to use IT effectively to communicate and perform key work functions	O	O	O	O	O
Being able to manage my own ongoing professional learning and development	O	O	O	O	O
Being able to help my staff learn how to deliver necessary changes effectively	O	O	O	O	O
An ability to chair meetings effectively	O	O	O	O	O
Being able to make effective presentations to a range of different groups	O	O	O	O	O
Being able to organise my work and manage time effectively	O	O	O	O	O
Having sound administrative and resource management skills	O	O	O	O	O
Other (please specify):	O	O	O	O	O

Giving focus to these areas of skill and knowledge

ITEMS	Extent of focus				
	Low		Medium		High
To what extent has your leadership development to date focused on areas of skills and knowledge like those listed above?	O	O	O	O	O
To what extent have leadership selection or promotion processes in which you have been involved focused on areas of skills and knowledge like those listed above?	O	O	O	O	O

Support for your leadership development

In your experience how effective has each of the following activities been in developing your capabilities as an academic leader?

ITEMS	Effectiveness for developing my leadership capabilities					
	Not experienced	Low		Medium		High
Completing a tertiary qualification relevant to leadership	O	O	O	O	O	O
Attending learning and teaching conferences	O	O	O	O	O	O
Participating in higher education leadership seminars	O	O	O	O	O	O
Accessing leadership information on the internet	O	O	O	O	O	O
Completing formal leadership programs provided by your university	O	O	O	O	O	O
Completing formal leadership programs given by external providers	O	O	O	O	O	O
Study of 'real- life' workplace problems	O	O	O	O	O	O
Participating in peer networks within the university	O	O	O	O	O	O
Participating in peer networks beyond the University	O	O	O	O	O	O
Ad hoc conversations about work with people in similar roles	O	O	O	O	O	O
Undertaking work-placements or exchanges	O	O	O	O	O	O
Participating in 360 degree feedback reviews based on known leadership capabilities	O	O	O	O	O	O
Participating in annual performance reviews	O	O	O	O	O	O
Being involved in formal mentoring/coaching programs	O	O	O	O	O	O
Being involved in informal mentoring/coaching	O	O	O	O	O	O
Learning 'on-the-job'	O	O	O	O	O	O
Undertaking self-guided reading on leadership	O	O	O	O	O	O
Involvement in professional leadership groups or associations	O	O	O	O	O	O
Participating in leadership development programs which are custom-tailored to your needs	O	O	O	O	O	O
Undertaking site visits to other institutions or agencies	O	O	O	O	O	O
Other (please specify):	O	O	O	O	O	O

Overall, what do you believe to be the MOST effective methods for developing the capabilities of leaders in roles like yours?

Overall, what do you believe to be the LEAST effective methods for developing the capabilities of leaders in roles like yours?

What is one key step you believe YOUR UNIVERSITY could take to improve the selection and development of learning and teaching leaders in higher education?

What is one key step you believe YOU could take to improve the selection and development of learning and teaching leaders in your university?

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.

If after hitting the SUBMIT button below, the survey does NOT submit (and a message box appears), please print the survey and post it to:

Leadership Survey
PO BOX 1000
St. Marys NSW 1790.

Appendix Three:
Towards A Change Capable University Culture

A University Culture unsupportive of effective change management	A University Culture supportive of effective change management
Endless meetings, poorly focused with no discernible outcome-a focus on talk without action. 'Contrived collegiality' or a tendency for group consensus to override taking hard, evidence-based change decisions	A commitment to collective action - more 'ready, fire, aim' than 'ready, aim, aim, aim' - using carefully monitored pilot projects to learn how best to make a desired change work by doing it
Decision-making is ad hoc, reactive and anecdotal; everything seems to be of equal importance and decisions are typically made on the run	Evidence-based decision-making which is outcomes focused-consensus around robust data and research evidence not simply around the table; evidence of a more focused & proactive approach to management
Lack of clarity about what really counts most to the university	People know what is happening and what the key change issues are that affect them
Communication overload where a 'shot gun' approach to using emails and memos is used and there is no indication of their relative importance or response to feedback given	Communication is controlled, focused, targeted, personal and followed up with action. Key messages on what really counts are simply given in multiple modes and multiple locations
Pockets of excellence which are unknown to others. General lack of 'connectedness'. Tendency to operate like a 'cottage industry'	There is a systematic approach to identifying good practice, rewarding and disseminating it. People know what is going on and who does what.
Intolerance of diversity or dissent. Tendency towards 'group think' & use of a call for either 'academic freedom' or 'consensus' as a key block to substantive change Small cliques of people being 'in the know' whereas many others are left out	Recognition/toleration of diversity & encouragement of justified dissent. A push to take collective action on areas which the evidence shows must be addressed. Decision-making is consultative, inclusive, decisive and transparent
Individualised, competitive, isolated pockets of practitioners, without any shared institutional 'moral purpose' High levels of micro-political behaviour, passive resistance, anomie, back-room deals and 'back stabbing'	Existence of a large number of reciprocal, informal networks and 'communities of practice' both within and beyond the university A 'can do' feel where people help and share ideas with each other in key areas

A University Culture unsupportive of effective change management	A University Culture supportive of effective change management
Individual and institutional defensiveness about criticism or poor performance Unwillingness to question traditional approaches, structures, systems	Willingness to face and address areas of poor performance
Transfer of responsibility to others: 'why don't they'. Often associated with a heavy bureaucracy which is blindly rules based	Widespread acceptance of responsibility and accountability-'a why don't we' mentality
People are cynical, uninterested or negative about the institution. There is a high staff turnover rate, continuous leaks to the press Staff are hard to access and unresponsive Institution is slow to respond and overly bureaucratic	Staff are proud to be working at the institution. There is a low staff turnover rate A strong commitment to responsiveness & doing a quality job with students and other key beneficiaries of the university's work … A commitment to equity, transparency and fairness
Senior executive are isolated and show little interest or commitment to getting into contact with line staff or taking informed but hard decisions	Senior Executive are in regular personal contact with staff and their priorities for change are widely known and supported. They are highly respected for their skill, support and ability to take a tough but correct decision
Staff work around poor performers and tolerate them not 'pulling their weight'. An unwillingness to raise unpleasant issues in the interests of social affinity	Staff are interested in finding out key areas where they need to improve and then set about addressing these
A primary focus on economic performance and buildings	Strong support for the triple bottom line-economic, social and sustainability outcomes
Limited knowledge of which staff are doing high-quality work or recognition of it	Rewards for strategically important collaboration across disciplinary boundaries and between academic and support areas

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