



Stage 1 – LEADERSHIP FOR ORGANISATIONS

Module 2 – UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP

The Leadership Academy is a learning and action programme for mayors, senior officials and elected representatives of local government.

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1 MODULE OVERVIEW

1.1 BACKGROUND

- There are many theories of leadership and many approaches to leadership practice, which in many cases, are not consistent with each other.
- There is no agreed definition, as the concept of 'leadership' may be understood from different perspectives by different (organisational) cultures (See Stage 2 of LAP). Consequently, there are many ways to interpret leadership.
- This Leadership Academy focuses on the practice of leadership in local government. Within such context, the LAP promotes the idea that there is leadership capacity in everyone (i.e. all staff, team members, etc.), which must be strengthened and encouraged so to ensure that each organisation delivers good governance according to the CoE 12 principles.

1.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To acquire knowledge on 'leadership' – as it is envisaged within the LAP.
- To understand the added value of a situational approach to leadership (there is no "one size fits all" solution).

1.3 LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Participants acquired the understanding on how leadership can be interpreted and implemented, according to specific needs.
- Participants equipped so to promote the LAP approach of leadership in their own organisations.

1.4 DURATION

- 145 minutes

2 MODULE STRUCTURE

2.1 INTERACTIVE INTRODUCTION

- The concept of 'authority' is explained to participants;
- Participants interact on their perception on authority;
- Participants identify their perceived differences between leadership and management practices.

2.2 GROUP EXERCISE 1 - IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP FEATURES IN DAILY PRACTICES

- The LAP approach on leadership as "situational/flexible" is introduced to participants.

2.3 FEEDBACK SESSION 1

- Participants are facilitated into a feedback session.

2.4 GROUP EXERCISE 2 - IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP STYLES TO OVERCOME DAY-TO-DAY CHALLENGES

- Participants identify (in groups of 3-4-people) situations within their organisations where a specific leadership style would be useful to overcome a challenge.

2.5 INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE– SELF-ASSESSMENT "THE SKILLS OF A LOCAL LEADER FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE"

- Participants fill-in individually the Self-Assessment Questionnaire.

3 WORKING DEFINITIONS

3.1 LEADERSHIP

The skill and process to guide organisations, teams and individuals. It goes beyond management as it encompasses the capacity to lead by example, to inspire, to challenge inefficient systems and to enable others to take responsibility and act.

The traits of a leader are inherent to all. A leader is one who uses individual capacities to enable processes enlisting the aid and support of others in defining the organisations' vision and accomplishing the corresponding tasks.

3.2 AUTHORITY

For the purpose of LAP, the concept of 'Authority':

- Refers to the power that comes with the job or position;
- The concept is used often in relation to a Traditional Authority model, which may

represent both the background and a current context for some of the LAP participants.

3.3 MANAGEMENT

The process of setting the strategy of an organisation and coordinating the efforts of its members, considering all available resources. It refers to: planning, organising, coordinating, controlling, commanding and staffing.

3.4 MANAGER

A person controlling or administering a business/organisation or part of it. For the purpose of LAP, such figure corresponds to civil servants in a position to exercise management.

4 KEY CONCEPTS

4.1 EXPLANATORY NOTE ON LEADERSHIP¹

The leadership of a local authority comprises in the first instance the Mayor and other senior elected representatives and officials. They have the key responsibility for the management of the local authority.

They have three main functions:

- To look ahead, developing, sharing and planning a longer-term vision of the community.
- To provide strategic management for the organisation of the local authority and for the provision of local public services whether delivered:
 - by the local authority itself;
 - in partnership with other organisations; or
 - through outsourcing arrangements.
- To engage local people and organisations in the activities of the local authority by:
 - keeping them informed (e.g. of Council plans and policies);
 - consulting them on important matters (e.g. the draft budget); and
 - sharing the decision-making role (e.g. in neighbourhood committees or in the joint provision of a service).

The leadership creates the climate for good local 'governance'. What they do and how they perform influences whether the local authority is a good place for staff to work in and whether the community is a good place to live.

People in leadership positions therefore need to:

- be effective to carry out their functions well; and
- show integrity to gain the confidence of the people they are elected to serve.

¹ Council of Europe. (2005). Toolkit Of Local Government Capacity-Building Programmes - <http://www.slg-coe.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Toolkit-of-local-government-capacity-building-programmes.pdf> (last accessed January 2017)

4.2 LEADERSHIP AND AUTHORITY

Power is the general capacity to get things done. Power is exercised in three main modalities: coercive, economic and cultural.

Authority is the cultural legitimation of exercising power and it is often identified with a job or position². People in a position of authority can exercise power in a variety of ways and their combinations: morally, imposing sanctions (coercive), by managing resources (economic), etc.

This definition of authority implies a hierarchy, where only one relies on his/her power of position to get things done.

When striving to deliver good governance according to the 12 CoE principles, many organisations encounter obstacles, mainly do the fact that they use authority instead of leadership (concepts that might be confused, see for definition Section 3).

The LAP introduces the idea that all staff members should be empowered with leadership 'elements' so to gain more ownership of their tasks, and thus to increase their sense of responsibility towards the outcome.

Leadership, as understood in this LAP, implies that ALL within an organisation should recognise and acknowledge their own responsibility towards the implementation of good governance.

The organisation culture frames the opportunity of all organisations' members to effectively do so (organisation culture – Stage 2).

4.3 THE LEADERSHIP ROLE OF ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES³

Local communities elect representatives so that

² Olse, M.E. (ed). (1970). McMillan, London

³Adapted from Council of Europe. (2005). Toolkit Of Local Government Capacity-Building Programmes. (Section 3 – III.Leadership)

they can be properly represented in local government.

This is a challenging role. Representatives are elected to serve the interests of the people that elected them. They are also elected to serve the interests of the wider community. Indeed, they are elected to provide effective democratic local government.

It is also a position of responsibility and opportunity. They are there to try to resolve the every-day problems of citizens. They are there to make sure that local public services are both efficient and effective, that they respond to the needs of local people.

Elected representatives are there, *inter alia*, to ensure that local government is transparent and is governed by high ethical standards, that there is good two-way communications between local people and local government, that local people are involved.

It is also a position capable of abuse. Self-interest can win out over community interest and public ethics. This is the risk. Elected representatives must not only be ethical; they must be seen to be ethical.

Elected representatives have a real opportunity to make a difference, to contribute to the well-being of their communities. To carry out such responsibilities, they need experience and skills.

Elected representatives need to understand how to work alongside staff and to get the best out of them. They are not there to do the job of staff. But both staff and elected representatives are there as a team to deliver effective democratic local government. They need to understand each other's role.

Moreover, they need to understand the financial possibilities and limitations of the local authority. They need to understand how to develop policy and translate it into action, how to turn promises into practice, how not to make promises they cannot keep. They need to know how to work with others and learn from them. They need to know how to engage local people and local organisations in local government.

4.3.1 The 9 skills of a competent local elected representative.

The following are 9 skills, which the Council of Europe identified as the competencies that an elected representative should master.

An elected representative:

1. Provides leadership to the community
2. Implements regulations and monitors performance
3. Challenges the local authority to do better
4. Communicates well
5. Works in partnership with others
6. Shows good political understanding and behavior
7. Provides vision for the community and the local authority
8. Manages performance to drive up the standards of local public services
9. Delivering excellence

Elected representatives should not expect to be excellent in all aspects of every skill. But a local authority should be able to make good use of the strengths and skills elected representatives bring to the local authority, and elected representatives should seek personal development in those areas of weakness.

Local authority staff should actively support the elected representatives. They should understand their needs and perspectives. They should ensure that the elected representatives are fully informed and engaged. They should ensure that advice and training is made available.

4.4 INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP

In order to promote such leadership and encourage its diffusion, individuals in a role of authority could put in to practice⁴ actions within the following five clusters:

- Model the way (i.e. acting as role models and examples embodying leadership attitudes);
- Inspire a shared vision (i.e. encouraging

⁴ Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2007). *The leadership challenge* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

the integration of different perspectives – Ref. Module 8);

- Challenge the process (i.e. consider the 'usual' way of decision making and compare it with the 12 Principles);
- Enable others to act (i.e. contributing to set an organisational culture);
- Encourage the heart (i.e. support motivation in others).

Individual leadership can be described as embodying many qualities, such as being:

- Honest;
- Forward-looking;
- Inspiring;
- Competent;
- Intelligent;
- Fair minded;
- Straight forward;
- Broad minded;
- Supportive;
- Dependable;
- Cooperative;
- Courageous;
- Determined;
- Caring;
- Imaginative;
- Mature;
- Ambitious;
- Loyal;
- Self-controlled;
- Independent.

The list is not exhaustive and individual leadership is not a sum of such characteristics, rather it is about being aware of own personal traits which can be mastered to be a leader.

4.5 DIFFERENT LEVELS OF LEADERSHIP

Within any organisation, leadership is not a top down practice, but a horizontal process exercised at all levels:

Strategic – this level embodies the responsibility for the overall success of an organisation, focusing on the "big picture" rather than on day-to-day details. At this level it is important to define a vision, objectives and values, and to communicate these effectively across the organisation.

Operational – this level implies responsibility for turning strategies into action. This includes the detailed planning of operations and securing resources to achieve the key objectives.

Relational – this level refers to the responsibility for day-to-day interactions within the organisation.

For an organisation to be truly successful, the managers must understand the importance of their role in transferring strategic objectives to all, thus sharing the responsibility for all to contribute. Everyone in the organisation is then aligned to the same goals and work together to achieve these (see Organisational culture – Stage 2).

4.6 MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

The Situational Leadership model was developed by Hershey⁵ and Blanchard and Johnson⁶. The fundamental underpinning of the Situational Leadership theory is that there is no single "best" style of leadership. The most successful leadership are those that balance the needs of the context with the skills available.

Senior officers in any organisation may act as inspirers of leadership, according to different styles, each responding to specific needs: some examples are detailed below:

4.6.1 A manager using a 'Directive Leadership' style (*red quadrant*):

- Acknowledges the employee's enthusiasm and skills and provides specific direction and instruction.
- Identifies desired outcomes, goals and timelines.
- Defines what a good job looks like and how performance will be tracked and monitored.
- Takes the lead in action-planning and problem-solving.
- Provides frequent follow-up and feedback.

This might be the appropriate style for a context where individual level of responsibility is not yet

⁵ The Situational Leader

⁶ The One Minute Manager.

consolidated as a day-to-day practice. In this can the manager acts the first 'cluster' of actions as summarized in section 4.2, as he/she needs to 'lead by example'.

4.6.2 A manager using a 'Coaching Leadership' style (*brown quadrant*):

- Involves the employee in identifying problems and in setting goals.
- Listens and supports - offers the employee an opportunity to discuss concerns and share ideas and gives direction and coaches to refine skills.
- Makes the final decisions about action plans after listening to the employee's ideas.
- Explains why a particular approach is being taken.
- Provides perspective and continues to provide frequent follow-up and feedback.

This might be the appropriate style for inspiring a shared vision (see Section 4.2) when the team is willing to engage and needs to be guided.

4.6.3 A manager using a 'Supporting Leadership' style (*yellow quadrant*):

- Shares responsibility with the employee for problem identification and goal-setting but the employee takes the lead in finding solutions;
- Listens and encourages self-reliant problem solving and decision making;
- Provides reassurance, support, encouragement and praise;
- Explains ways to make a goal or task more interesting and challenging, if motivation is low;

- Works with the employee to evaluate his or her work.

This might be the appropriate style for enabling others to act (see Section 4.2), based on their willingness to take responsibility. In this case a challenge of the methods adopted is also useful as an empowerment tool.

4.6.4 A manager using a 'Delegating Leadership' style (*green quadrant*):

- Enables the employee to take charge;
- Defines problems and desired outcomes with the employee;
- Expects the employee to take the lead in goal-setting, action-planning and decision-making;
- Encourages the employee to evaluate his or her own work and challenges the employee to even higher levels of performance;
- Provides opportunities for the employee to share in / celebrate successes and mentor others while recognising, valuing and rewarding the employee's contributions to the organisation.

This also might be the appropriate style for enabling others to act (see Section 4.2), once they already have acquired the required skills and the critical capacity to self-appraise their work.

Competent senior officers will seek to develop their working relationships with staff by helping each of them to achieve high levels of both competence and commitment. The chart above shows how their leadership approach will change with each stage of this evolution.

5 EXERCISES

5.1 EXERCISE 1 – INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE 1 – IDENTIFYING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Read each of the statements below and decide whether you think it refers to management or leadership:

	BEHAVIOURS AND ACTIONS	MANAGEMENT	LEADERSHIP
1	Initiates Change		
2	Is a classic good soldier		
3	Administration		
4	Innovates		
5	Maintains		
6	Plans long term		
7	Models the way to behave		
8	Does things right		
9	Imitates		
10	Motivates and inspires		
11	Has eye on the bottom line		
12	Asks why - and why not		
13	Focuses on the people and potential		
14	Focuses on systems and structures		
15	Copes with complexity		
16	Develops the vision and people		
17	Organises people		
18	Accepts the status quo		
19	Enables others to act		
20	Inspires trust		

When you have completed the task – and not before - check your answers with the list below.

1:L, 2:M, 3:M, 4:L, 5:M, 6:L, 7:L, 8:M, 9:M, 10:L, 11:M, 12:L, 13:L, 14:M, 15:M, 16:L, 17:M, 18:M, 19:L,

5.2 EXERCISE 2 – GROUP EXERCISE 1 – IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP FEATURES IN DAILY PRACTICES

Daily Practices	Leadership Features
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

5.3 EXERCISE 3 – GROUP EXERCISE 2 – IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP STYLES TO OVERCOME DAY-TO-DAY CHALLENGES

Day-to-day challenges in Daily Practices	Leadership Styles
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

5.4 EXERCISE 4 – INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE – SELF-ASSESSMENT

Please fill-in individually the Questionnaire. You are invited not to share your answers but to keep the filled in questionnaire with you for your future reference.

1 - Providing leadership to the community	1	2	3	4	5
a) Looks for opportunities to engage with local people and local organisations, seeks their views; reaches out to all groups.					
b) Keeps up-to-date with issues of local concern, getting information from a wide range of sources.					
c) Promotes transparency and high ethical standards.					
d) Is approachable, understanding and encourages trust.					
e) Provides a voice for all sections of the community.					
f) Mediates fairly and constructively between people with conflicting needs.					
g) Campaigns with enthusiasm, courage and persistence on behalf of others					

2 - Implementing regulations and monitoring performance	1	2	3	4	5
a) Evaluates arguments according to evidence; makes independent and impartial judgements.					
b) Chairs meetings effectively; follows procedures and keeps processes on track.					
c) Follows the legal process, balancing public needs and local policy.					
d) Monitors the performance of the local authority and intervenes as appropriate to ensure progress.					
e) Seeks feedback on his / her own performance and learns from experience.					
f) Understands and carries out any legal role to the highest standards.					

3 - Challenging the local authority to do better	1	2	3	4	5
a) Quickly analyses and assimilates information, taking account of the wider strategic context.					
b) Presents arguments in a concise and meaningful way.					
c) Asks for explanations and listens carefully to opposite arguments.					
d) Checks on the implementation of recommendations.					
e) Challenges processes, decisions and people, where necessary, in an objective, rigorous and resilient way.					
f) Acts as a 'critical friend', provides constructive feedback and acknowledges the success of others.					

4 - Communicating well	1	2	3	4	5
a) Communicates regularly with the community via newsletters, phone calls and local media.					
b) Listens, checks for understanding and adapts style as necessary.					
c) Builds relationships with the local media; creates opportunities for communicating key decisions, activities and achievements.					
d) Ensures issues are properly understood, so that decisions can be made based on proper information.					
e) Speaks clearly and confidently in public; uses easy language and avoids jargon.					
f) Provides regular feedback; keeps people informed and manages expectations.					
g) Uses appropriate language to communicate key points verbally and in writing (eg letters, reports, interviews, presentations).					
h) Encourages the use of institutional mechanisms to ensure good communications both internally and externally.					

5 - Working in partnership with others	1	2	3	4	5
a) Builds good relationships with colleagues, staff and the wider community.					
b) Achieves objectives by co-ordinating others, maintaining focus on the task and persisting in the face of setbacks.					
c) Empowers others to take responsibility; knows when to delegate or provide support; involves citizens in decision-making.					
d) Makes others feel valued, trusted and included, including those of different backgrounds.					
e) Shows patience in developing networks and partnerships.					
f) Makes best use of the will, capacity and expertise of other organisations (public, private, voluntary) in local government					

6 - Showing good political understanding and behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
a) Actively represents his / her political views and values through decisions and actions.					
b) Where he / she is a member of a political group, helps develop cohesion within the group and ensures good communication.					
c) Communicates political values through canvassing, campaigning and in other ways of engaging the public.					
d) Is committed to developing a deep political understanding of the local and national situation.					
e) Acts ethically; understands and communicates political values to others.					
f) Works across political boundaries in the interests of the community without compromising political values.					

7 - Providing vision for the community and the local authority	1	2	3	4	5
a) Contributes to strategic policy-making and prioritises actions based on local needs, manifesto commitments and regional opportunities.					
b) Works with staff to collate and analyse information and inform budgets and plans.					
c) Encourages involvement of other stakeholders in policy development.					
d) Contributes to and communicates a shared vision of the future; provides clear direction and promotes understanding.					
e) Is open to new ideas and adapts innovatively to change.					
f) Enhances own effectiveness by broadening his / her perspective and learning from others and from best practice.					

8 - Managing performance to drive up the standards of local public services	1	2	3	4	5
a) Works closely with senior staff to develop, agree and implement strategies for efficient and effective service delivery.					
b) Sets and communicates realistic objectives; monitors performance and addresses short-comings.					
c) Emphasises a team approach and shares responsibility for success and failure.					
d) Encourages performance in service delivery to be challenged; responds positively to feedback and new ideas.					
e) Involves service users in the design and monitoring of services.					
f) Represents local people and local organisations in the appropriate forums.					

9 - Delivering excellence	1	2	3	4	5
a) Provides leadership; inspires trust and gains commitment to policies and decisions.					
b) Shapes a culture of excellence; acts as a role model for proper behaviour, ethical practice and democratic process.					
c) Builds strong relationships with senior staff and other elected representatives based on open communication and cooperative working.					
d) Acts as the public face of the local authority; champions the local authority's needs in other forums.					
e) Works across political and local authority boundaries to foster good communications and cooperation.					
f) Anticipates and resolves difficulties; judges when, and when not to, get involved and when to say 'no'.					
g) Is committed to learning, developing others and introducing best practice.					
h) Juggles numerous and sometimes conflicting responsibilities effectively.					

6 REFERENCES

Blanchard, K.H., Johnson, S. (2003). *The One Minute Manager*, New York: Morrow

Council of Europe. (2005). *Toolkit Of Local Government Capacity-Building Programmes* - <http://www.slg-coe.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Toolkit-of-local-government-capacity-building-programmes.pdf> (last accessed January 2017)

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Olse, M.E. (ed). (1970). *McMillan*, London

The following CoE standards provide the basis for local authority policies on leadership:

Recommendation 60 (1999) of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities on political integrity of local and regional elected representatives

Recommendation 60 recommends a Code of Conduct for all elected representatives. This covers (i) general principles, (ii) specific obligations on taking office, holding office and relinquishing office, (iii) the means of supervision, (iv) relations with the public, (v) relations with local government staff, (vi) relations with the media, and (vii) information, dissemination and awareness- raising.

Handbook on Public Ethics prepared by the CoE Steering Committee on Local and Regional Democracy (2004)

This Handbook will provide local authorities with a broad understanding and a wide range of ideas on ensuring that public ethics is taken seriously, and acted upon, within a local authority. It includes three sections: (i) examples of good practice in different aspects of public ethics, (ii) an overview of public ethics in Europe with examples from different countries, and (iii) examples of national initiatives.