Challenges for leaders, leadership and development

Robin Middlehurst
• Reflecting on survey & research evidence
• What does ‘challenge’ mean to you?
• Updated HE Challenges
• ‘Meta-themes’ from the research
• Implications for institutions
• Implications for individuals & groups
Challenge?
Reference Points
2004-5 Survey

15 key strategic challenges for UK HE institutions, 2005 - 2010

Management of student numbers
Widening participation
HR issues
ICT
Resources and Estates Development
Governance
Sustainability and corporate social responsibility

Institutional Funding
Market positioning
Competition & collaboration
Enhancing the student experience
Research management
Internationalisation & Bologna
Business, regional & community interactions

Embedding equality and diversity
• Importance of strategic challenges over 3-5 years?
• Confidence in HEI capacity to respond to strategic challenges?
• Perceptions of development needs in relation to the challenges?

• Small-scale ‘snapshot’ as prompt for debate: 100 responses, majority from senior HE staff + other biases....
LMG Challenges for HEIs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Avg. Importance of Challenge (1-10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Experience</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Numbers</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources/Estates</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR Issues</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK Competition</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalisation</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business/Community Interaciton</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KT</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Management</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability/CSR</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bologna Process</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Sample (100)
Analysis by ‘sector group’ showed subtle (& only indicative) differences
- internationalisation v UK competition
- managing research v student numbers
- Sustainability & CSR important to GuildHE members
Challenge Capacity Gap

Leadership Foundation for Higher Education

Importance

Capacity Gap

Student Exp.
Funding
Student Num.
Marketing
Resources/Estates
HR Issues
UK Competition
Internationalisation
Bus/Comm Inter.
ICT
KT
Research Man.
Sust./CSR
WP
Governance
Bologna

-2.0  -1.5  -1.0  -0.5  0.0  0.5  1.0  1.5  2.0
Development Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Avg. Level of Need (1-10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle management development</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing senior teams</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing project teams</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping with change</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succession planning</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalisation &amp; global context</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership of collab./part./ alliances</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership of research</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership of teaching</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market positioning of HEIs</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality &amp; diversity</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance &amp; governor development</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Sample (100)
Development Needs

- ‘Middle-level’ development & developing senior teams rated highest across all SGs
- ‘Leadership of teaching’ rated higher outside Russell/94 Group; management of research higher within
• Future context & shape of LMG in HE
• Becoming a Leader
  – Career trajectories & selection
• Leadership in Practice (general)
  – Evolving roles, structures & cultures
• Leadership in Practice (specific)
  – Teaching, Research, Strategic Partnerships, Diversity
• Leadership Development
  – Evaluation of contribution to individuals, teams & organisation
• **New directions?**
  – Change & adaptation
  – Roles, structures, relationships & identity

• **Dilemmas?**
  – Approaches to leadership
  – Tensions
  – Organisational cultures changing?

• **Unfinished business?**
  – Gaps in research
  – Issues for HEIs
  – Issues for individuals & groups
Continuity & change

• Time-frames for change
  – Value of longitudinal studies & building on previous research
• Incremental change, quality enhancement v step change
• Adaptive v transformational leadership
• Need for step-change?
• Is leadership at all levels fit for (new) purpose(s)?
New Directions?

Roles

- Adaptation: numbers, portfolio range, influence & delegated powers (PVCs, DVCs)
- Bounded & crossing boundaries: hybrid, multi-professional roles (PMs, PVCs)
- New professions emerging
- Variety, flux, many drivers of change
- ‘Squeezed’, ‘shared’, overlapping, mixed line-relationships
New Directions?

- **Structures & re-structuring**
  - Larger & devolved, top team structures, ‘structured networks’

- **Relationships & Identities**
  - Informal & social, professional networks, project working groups
  - Balance between ‘cosmopolitan & local’
**Dilemmas**

- **Approaches to Leadership**
  - Heroic & distributed > ‘blended’
  - Horizontal & vertical
  - Multiple sources of power & authority, many leaders
  - Contribution to organisational effectiveness?
  - Rhetoric & reality
  - Positive & negative leadership actions, behaviours
  - Context (and timing) are key
  - Importance of effective *management*

‘A leadership web?’
Tensions

- Autonomy
- Individualism
- Top down, planned
- Ambiguity
- Formality
- ‘Administrators’
- Specialists
- Strategic
- Collegiality

- Direction
- Collective action
- Bottom-up, emergent
- Clarity
- Informality
- ‘Academics’
- Generalists
- Operational
- Managerialism

‘A dynamic system, a system in transition?’
Organisational culture

Control of implementation

Policy definition

Loose

Collegium
Servant leadership
Consensual & bottom-up

Bureaucracy
Hierarchical leadership
Formal & top-down

Tight

Enterprise
Collective leadership
Flexible & top-down

Corporation
Transformational Leadership
Strategic & political

(adapted from McNay, 1995)
Unfinished Business?

Gaps & new research?

- Links to wider social science & management literatures
- Comparative research:
  - Different HEIs, different disciplines/professions
  - Academic & other staff groups
- Working constructively with conflict
- Cross-sector & collaborative working
- “Performance” and “effectiveness” (link to LD)
- Integration, engagement & ‘citizenship’?
Unfinished Business?

Issues for HEIs

• Achieving integration & engagement
  – Language, perspectives, priorities, structures & systems vs people & relationships
• Motivation & measurement of ‘performance’
  – Nature, determinants, who’s responsible?
• Role tensions & career routes
• Educating recruiters and selectors
• Preparation for entry and exit from roles
• Cultural analysis, understanding values
Unfinished Business?

Issues for individuals & groups

• Career routes & career management, professional identities & succession planning
• Role analysis, negotiation, engagement
• VC, DVC & TMTs – power, patronage, ‘leader v leadership’
• Roles + recruitment; VCs, PVC/DVC, Registrars, Deans
• Management education + tailored leadership development
“If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change”

Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa (1896-1957)