

Approach pilot study leadership practice FSW, Radboud University

The study of leadership practice at Radboud University is qualitative and exploratory in nature. The goal is to gain in-depth insight into the factuality of leadership within a specific unit.

How is leadership provided within that unit and how does this leadership practice relate to the vision formulated by Radboud University? The study is primarily focused on the factor leading to teams, but from that perspective personal leadership is also discussed. It concerns "leadership of teams" at all levels, namely: board, institutes, courses and departments, both scientific and professional support. Due to its exploratory nature, it is open, general uses initial question that can be specified in the conversation according to the values and core themes of the leadership vision.

The pilot will be held at the Faculty of Social Sciences, with the aim of continuing the study at the other units. In addition to about 20 personal interviews, 3 meetings in focus groups are also organized. These serve to test and supplement the interview results. FSW employees have the option of registering for a focus group and providing input. The confidential advisers will also be interviewed.

The interviews are confidential and have a semi-structured set-up. Below the four themes that will be discussed and a number of questions that will be asked in the interview. The interviewer continues to ask questions about the answers of the respondent in order to obtain the desired depth.

The study is commissioned by the Executive Board. In the pilot, the Executive Board is jointly commissioning the research in co-creation with the Faculty Board of FSW and also receives joint feedback on the results. The study is being conducted by the Galan Group, with Prof. Freek Peters, professor of contextual leadership at Tilburg University as principal investigator. Co-researchers are drs. Maureen Hendriks and Drs. Helen Siebelhoff. From the RU, the study is supervised by Drs. Bart Mom, MD advisor at HR Expo.

The reporting takes place by means of an anonymous clustering of the answers on the four themes, in order of frequency. This is discussed with the clients with a brief reflection by the researchers. That is where the question arises as to the common threads in the findings and the conclusions that can be drawn from them.

The four themes with the corresponding interview questions are as follows:

I. General view of leadership (= leading teams)

- can you characterize your image of leadership at FSW in a number of keywords?
- do you know to what extent that picture relates to the general picture at RU?

II. Appreciation of leadership practice

- what do you see as the strongest sides of the leadership at FSW?
- and what if the weaker sides?
- to what extent do you find the core values Courage, Connection and Openness?
- if you should give a school grade (0 to 10), what would that be?
- can you specify your judgment according to the 4 core themes of the vision? (vision & strategy, realization power, connecting, developing and valuing)
- how do you see the development over time (e.g. the past five years)? and why is that?

III. The leadership vision with the core themes and behavioral indicators

- is the leadership vision known to you? and wider around you?
- what do you see (in terms of impact and usability) of the leadership vision in practice?
- and in your own personal leadership?
- To what extent do you feel invited by your manager (s) to show courage, connection and openness?

- what good exemplary behavior do your supervisors see, do you show good exemplary behavior yourself?
- could it be different or better? how?

IV. A look ahead and opportunity for development

- In summary: where do you think FSW stands in leadership practice?
- what would you advise or wish FSW with regard to leadership development towards the future?
- do you have any spontaneous, sincere advice to the faculty board (a "heart cry")
- any other business: forgot any relevant matters?

Freek Peters

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