

**DTU** LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION

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## Preface

Through good leadership, DTU wants to develop and create value using the natural sciences and technical sciences to benefit society.

DTU will have the capacity, scientific capability, and leadership necessary to continuously create and develop excellent research environments.

Moreover, DTU wants to be a results-oriented, challenging and stimulating workplace. Good leadership at all levels is key to DTU's success in maintaining this ambition.

### **Leadership is everyone's business**

Leadership is understood to mean management of research groups of varying size and nature—as well as management of other organizational units in which specialists, researchers and other highly qualified staff produce joint results in a mutually binding work community at DTU.

DTU has a flat management structure—with a visible management—which is based on the principle of empowering all staff to

handle a high level of self-management. Therefore, the Leadership Foundation is not only relevant for DTU's more than 600 managers—but for everyone at DTU.

### **Good leadership at DTU**

Good leadership is very much about always respecting the employees.

This means that DTU managers are expected to involve their staff and engage in dialogue with them. Furthermore, it is important that the managers know themselves. As a manager, knowing your personal leadership style is significant for your ability to sense the effect of your decisions on others. Therefore, good leadership at DTU is also about authenticity and the ability to understand other people's situation.

Good leadership is everyone's business at DTU, and DTU will go a long way to empower employees who have the will and talent to pursue a management career.

*Anders Bjarklev, President*





## DTU's people approach

Human resources are DTU's most valuable asset. This is why all staff must experience having a mutually committing dialogue with their immediate manager. This personal approach reflects DTU's belief in the potential of every individual. This potential will be realized through leadership as a decisive factor for ensuring that all University staff are acknowledged and challenged constructively. In this meeting, management will help set the course.

DTU expects that all managers have the capacity not only to make room for—but also to generate value growth from—the

appreciable diversity represented in the DTU workforce.

One important management task is to provide backing for loyal, gifted individualists, colourful and energetic personalities, and dependable employees who make a special contribution to the community.

DTU's position as an elite technical university demands that work is conducted at elite level throughout the organization—adapted to the nature of the various departments. This makes particular demands on the individual manager's focus on and capacity to define the elite level in close, respectful dialogue with the individual employee.

One of the responsibilities of the manager is to focus on employee development and to support sparring, skills development, interdisciplinary cooperation and task development. One of the responsibilities of the employee is to have the courage to act on the desire to do things a little better every time we are faced with a new task.

### **Innovative thinking**

*means creative conception of ideas with the potential to create something new, as well as a balanced assessment of the consequence of these new ideas.*

### **Credibility**

*means possessing knowledge and insight and properly communicating this. It also involves recognizing when knowledge and insight are inadequate and the ability to communicate based on the prerequisites of the recipient.*

### **Commitment**

*means an approach to the work borne on enthusiasm, as well as a recognition of the obligations a working community entails.*

## DTU's values

The DTU Leadership Foundation interprets the values from the perspective that they encompass all managers at DTU. As a general rule, all managers are role models and committed to dialogue. The goal is to ensure that leadership inspires others to follow suit.

### **Innovative thinking**

DTU expects all managers to have an innovative mindset, embrace whatever is new and different, and respect the contemplative nature of thoughtfulness. Leadership supports innovation processes that challenge the status quo.

### **Credibility**

DTU expects all managers to communicate and demonstrate academic and personal integrity. Dialogue facilitates involvement and builds a foundation for meaningful management decisions.

### **Commitment**

DTU expects all managers to radiate commitment and be capable of situational leadership. Respecting individual motivational factors, everyone is committed to delivering excellent results.

## DTU generates results through leadership

It is a leadership task to encourage persistent inquisitiveness for new knowledge that promotes the personal and academic development of the individual. A manager's responsibilities include ensuring that career and skills development go hand in hand and are given the opportunity to blossom throughout the period of employment. The leadership task in this context is to set the bar so high that individuals feel motivated, as they have to make an extra effort to clear it. Leadership at DTU will always feature deep professional respect and fixed academic foundation in the work being performed.

### Responsibility and power

With the weight and influence accorded to leadership at DTU, it is clearly expected that managers have the human potential to allow power and humility to go hand in hand.

In situations where the manager has recognized that the skills and interests of the employee are not sufficient to ensure performance at the level required, it is the manager's responsibility to motivate and support the employee in pursuing a different career track.





## DTU Leadership Role

The DTU Leadership Role is based on four cornerstones. A significant cornerstone of leadership at DTU is academic competence. The other three are strategy, staff and resources. In addition, handling a leadership role at DTU is conditional upon the individual manager bringing personal leadership into play.

This means, for example, that all managers contemplate their own leadership practice and have an eye for ensuring that results are generated through interaction between people.

### Leadership priorities

It is expected that all managers can continuously prioritize leadership tasks and maintain a balance between considerations that may appear contradictory.

DTU's managers enjoy major flexibility in their management scope, and succeed in making room for leadership priorities within the scope under which they operate, and the regulations that apply.

## DTU's management guidelines

**DTU's guideline for academic management** requires all managers to pay attention to ensuring high academic quality. All managers have an academic background that enables them to authoritatively initiate interdisciplinary collaboration and to efficiently communicate the academic synergies inherent in the collaboration in question.

**DTU's guideline for resource management** involves all managers maintaining an overview and having the skill to navigate the complex structure of the organization. Managers must also be able to create cohesive resource management on the basis of drive and skill in making decisions.

**DTU's guideline for people management** entails all managers setting targets for the work and following up on the results. This is achieved through dialogue, as this creates

the best conditions for optimal resource utilization and talent cultivation. All managers also have the courage and competence to tackle conflicts and use them as a launching pad for improving the working relationship.

**DTU's guideline for strategic management** requires all managers to work strategically, strive to influence the future and achieve the organization's long-term goals through visionary thinking. This type of thinking extends beyond own leadership practice, as the role of manager also encompasses a responsibility for identifying relevant networks at and outside DTU.





## DTU's leadership and collaboration culture

DTU promotes organizational development through value-based management, respect, dialogue and involvement. The DTU leadership culture is based on DTU's Annual Cycle containing a range of official meetings at which dialogue is the focal point. The DTU Leadership Foundation also makes clear the importance of managers' awareness of their position as culture carriers and their responsibility for ensuring that DTU's leadership and collaboration culture develops over time—not only at official meetings, but in every situation where managers are present.

### **Dialogue and collaboration**

One management responsibility is to take the initiative to set up interdisciplinary co-operation whenever and wherever this has the potential to generate value for DTU. In addition, all managers are expected to feel responsible for DTU maintaining dialogue with society at both national and international levels.

DTU is characterized by a high level of project organization and project work. This demands a structure with the capacity to encompass major complexity and a management structure that cultivates dialogue and collaboration. This contributes to the required degree of transparency in the organization.

## Management organization

DTU strives to apply a flat management structure with a single point of responsibility. An individual employee will always have one—and only one—manager (defined as having employee development interview (MUS) responsibility). In practice, employees will often be working with multiple project managers across organizational boundaries, and have a main and secondary supervisor, etc. In this context, the concept of ‘single point of responsibility’ refers to there being a dialogue between the manager and project manager/supervisor concerning the contribution of the individual employee to the execution of the task (e.g. prior to the MUS with the manager).

The principal task of the Executive Board and the department and centre management is to secure the scope for task execution. The next layer of management involves both management and contribution to task execution.

The individual managers have clear authorizations and responsibilities and base their leadership on confidence in all employees to handle a high level of delegation.

Everyone at DTU is encouraged to cultivate professional dialogue and pan-organizational collaboration wherever this makes sense in relation to task execution.

In this context, ‘single point of responsibility’ means that if challenges arise in the collaboration or if doubts appear with regard to academic prioritization, it is expected that the dialogue will be referred backwards in the management line and that the problem will be solved there.

### **Self-management**

DTU operates with extensive delegation of competence. This is based on dialogue with one’s immediate manager, and it is linked to responsibility for solving the task.

In relation to self-management, **manager responsibility** is a clearly established scope. This requires clear and effective communication of the aims of the Development Goals and Measures (UMV), action plan activities and the task targets of the employee development interview

(MUS) so that each individual clearly understands his or her development goals and professional course.

In relation to self-management, **employee responsibility** is a matter of awareness of own competencies, the courage to assume responsibility and the ability to see own tasks as part of the big picture. DTU also expects everyone to work independently within the given scopes and to have a sense of when the involvement of the immediate manager is needed.

Strategy

UMV

Action plan

MUS

## DTU is an international university

Denmark bases its leadership approach on Scandinavian traditions. The leadership culture at DTU—and, indeed, in Denmark—is based on balance and equality between manager and employee. Danish managers generally prefer to generate consensus through dialogue rather than through the application of official power.

Although Danish leadership practice is shaped by an inclusive approach to decisions and changes, managers are ultimately responsible for the final decision, and this fact is respected.

Danish staff are familiar with this leadership approach, but several of DTU's international staff are the product of other cultures and leadership models—and may erroneously interpret the consensus-oriented and

reticent leadership style as an expression of lack of leadership.

It is therefore important that all managers at DTU—in particular those with international staff reporting to them—emphasize the point that everyone is mutually responsible for working together. The DTU Leadership Foundation also explicitly states that it is a management responsibility to initiate alignment of expectations regarding targets and scope between manager and employee. Another important task for managers involves communicating the message that DTU expects each individual—regardless of hierarchical standing—to have the courage to ask questions.





## Executive Board

One of the requirements in the DTU Leadership Foundation is that all managers communicate and, on this basis, assure transparency in management decisions. In relation to the Executive Board, it is particularly important that members of the Executive Board be clear in their communication because the entire organization listens attentively to what they have to say. Communication at Executive Board level largely has to do with setting targets, direction and scope, creating incentives for collaboration on a pan-organizational basis, and being clear about the University's strategic goals.

### **Elite university**

The fact that DTU is an elite university heightens the University's need for a clear Executive Board.

Being an elite technical university is an active choice that DTU has made, and this entails dispensing with a number of factors. It must be possible to relate all activities at DTU to the elite within one of DTU's four main areas. In order to ensure this choice is expedited downwards through the management system, it is essential that the Executive Board take the lead as a role model—and have the courage and the tools to act when the University's activities fall short of the requisite level.

### **Responsibilities**

One key aspect of Executive Board level responsibility is to be aware that the Executive Board and the circle of DTU department heads and centre directors constitute the only group with an overview of all University activities. This position commits the Executive Board to ensure that the DTU department heads and centre directors work together across departmental boundaries where they can see that this helps achieve the University's goals—and choose to discard activities in situations where they do not bring DTU closer to its strategic goals.



## Circle of DTU department heads and centre directors

As regards the circle of DTU department heads and centre directors, the distinguishing features of the partnership with the Executive Board are confidence and a holistic approach. This means the Executive Board expects the directors to base their academic decisions on what is most appropriate in relation to DTU as a whole. This requires the Executive Board to have confidence in the directors to act independently within the given scope. The scope is adjusted through the dialogue-based Annual Cycle, which forms the hub for managing DTU's numerous activities.

### **Academic level**

The DTU Leadership Foundation specifically states that it is the responsibility of the director to ensure a high academic level in all departmental or centre activities, and to assure a well-functioning administrative

organization based on good partnership with the group departments.

DTU department heads and centre directors also maintain an overview of the direction in which the department's or centre's subject area is moving. This overview takes the form of a vision for the department and the centre, which can be realized in the everyday work. In addition, the directors are responsible for using this overview to ensure they have the capacity to apply academic priorities as the basis for their actions in various relationships between the research groups and with external partners.

### **Visibility**

Moreover, a key director responsibility is to be a visible and visionary communicator, contributing to the sense of future targets and how these relate to DTU's strategic goals.

DIALOGUE-BASED  
Annual Cycle

## Dialogue with management

DTU's statutes describe how management at DTU is based on staff and student involvement and codetermination. The official scope for codetermination and involvement is likewise specified in the HR policies, where emphasis is placed on ongoing dialogue with staff about targets, resources and task execution.

### Collaboration agreement

The basis for the official scope is the collaboration agreement with the Danish State, which reflects mutual agreement that strong, solution-oriented and local collaboration between managers and employees is crucial to a well-functioning state sector. DTU's management is always attentive to good arguments and takes care to demonstrate goodwill in attempts to reach agreement.

This means that the opportunity to exert influence is linked to how the invitation to dialogue and partnership is issued, and to the quality of the arguments.

### Support and constructive criticism

DTU expects everyone to give their managers active support and constructive criticism. They can do this, for example, as part of daily dialogue, at employee development interviews (MUS), official meetings, during seminars, or in connection with DTU's job satisfaction surveys, etc. In addition, everyone is encouraged to contribute to a well-functioning and active partnership system. This may take the form of input to the agenda of the local liaison committees, dialogue with union representatives or putting oneself forward for an active role in the union organization. In addition, general issues can be forwarded to DTU's Cooperation and Joint Consultation Committee or tabled in the academic councils.

### Next step

If situations should nevertheless arise in which individuals feel that their voices are not heard, Portalen presents guidelines for dialogue with management, describing the options to act open to staff and students respectively.



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