



# Leading Through People, Purpose & Practice

*A Blended Leadership Approach for Higher Education*


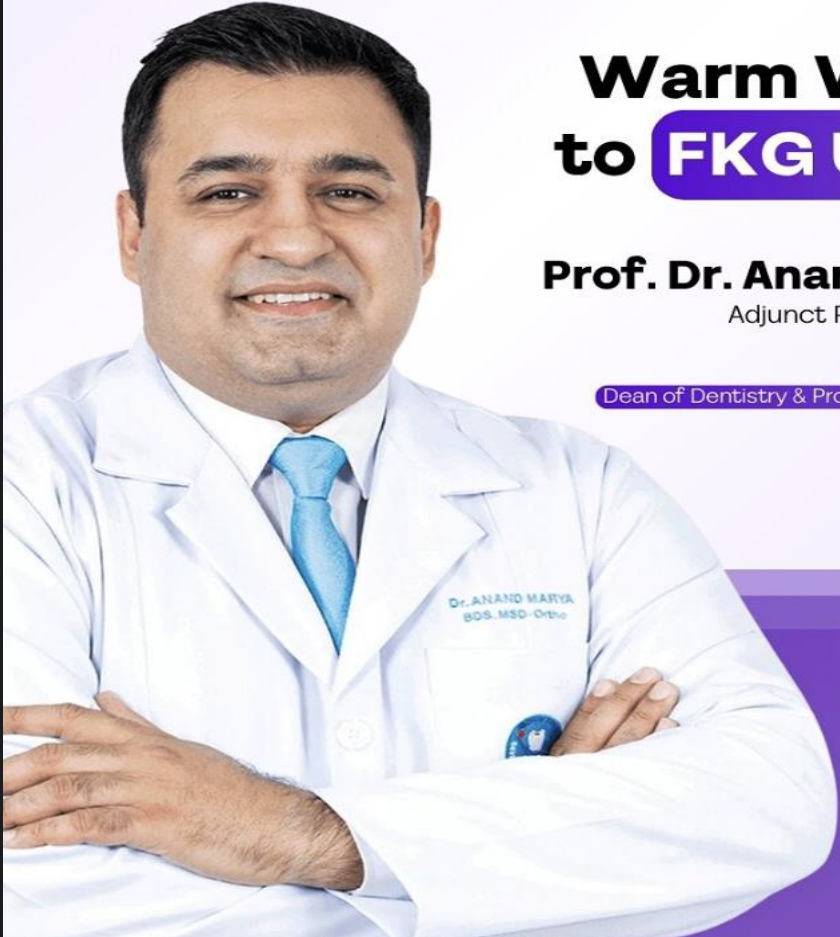


## DIES National Multiplication Training – LEAP 2026 Surabaya, Indonesia

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# Leadership Challenges in Higher Education Today



**Warm Welcome  
to FKG UK Petra!**

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Let's get to know ▶

Higher education institutions across the globe are navigating an unprecedented period of transformation. Leaders must respond to challenges that are both immediate and systemic, requiring agility, vision, and deep commitment to their communities.

## Digital & Pedagogical Transformation

Rapid shifts in teaching methods and technology integration demand continuous adaptation and innovation in learning environments.

## Quality Assurance Pressures

Increasing accountability standards and accreditation demands require robust systems and transparent governance structures.

## Diverse Stakeholder Needs

Balancing expectations of students, faculty, industry partners, and communities requires empathy and strategic decision-making.

## Societal Responsibility

Universities face growing expectations to address social challenges, promote equity, and contribute to sustainable development.



# Leadership as an Adaptive Practice

Effective leadership in higher education is not defined by a single approach or fixed methodology. Rather, it is a dynamic, evolving practice that responds to context, people, and circumstances. The most impactful leaders recognise that flexibility and continuous learning are not weaknesses—they are essential strengths.

In today's complex institutional environments, leaders must cultivate self-awareness and reflective capacity. Understanding when to inspire, when to listen, when to challenge, and when to serve requires both experience and intentional development. Leadership is less about title and more about influence, relationship, and sustained commitment to growth.

## Contextual Responsiveness

No single leadership style fits all situations—effective leaders read the situation and adapt accordingly.

## Continuous Evolution

Leadership is not static; it evolves with institutional needs, team dynamics, and personal growth.

## Reflective Practice

Regular self-reflection enables leaders to learn from experience, and refine their approach.



# The Blended Leadership Framework

Leadership in higher education is most effective when it draws from multiple philosophical traditions and practical approaches. The Blended Leadership Framework integrates four complementary styles, each bringing unique strengths to complex institutional environments. This is not about choosing one style over another—it's about developing the capacity to move fluidly between approaches based on what the situation demands.

1

## Transformational Leadership

Inspiring change, fostering innovation, and building collective commitment to institutional transformation and reform.

2

## Visionary Leadership

Setting long-term direction, anticipating future needs, and aligning institutional strategy with evolving educational and societal contexts.

3

## Coaching Leadership

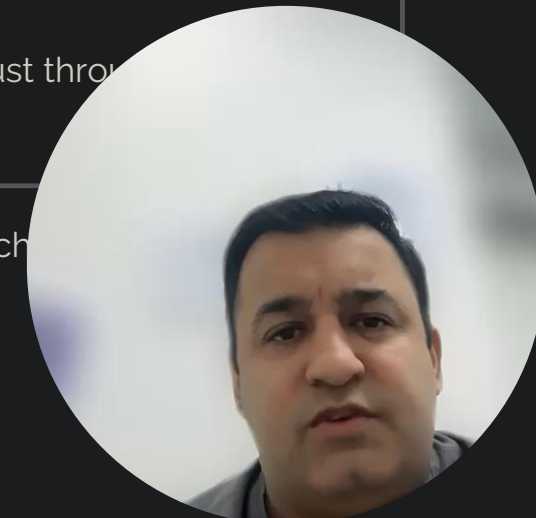
Developing human capital, nurturing potential, and creating cultures where continuous learning and growth are embedded in daily practice.

4

## Servant Leadership

Leading with humility, prioritising service, and building trust through decision-making and genuine care for people.

These four pillars work in concert, creating a leadership practice that is both principled and pragmatic. Effective leaders understand which approach to use at different moments, whilst maintaining coherence across all dimensions of their work.



# Transformational Leadership: Enabling Change

Transformational leadership is about creating momentum for meaningful change in institutions that may be resistant to it. In higher education, where tradition and stability are often valued, transformation requires leaders who can articulate compelling reasons for change whilst honouring institutional heritage.



## Inspiring Shared Purpose

Transformational leaders articulate a vision that connects individual roles to institutional mission, creating collective ownership and commitment.



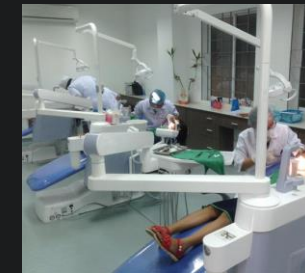
## Encouraging Innovation

By creating space for experimentation and celebrating creative approaches, leaders foster cultures where new ideas can flourish without fear.



## Moving Beyond Resistance

Rather than dismissing concerns, transformational leaders engage with resistance, understand its sources, and work collaboratively to address fears.



## Empowering During Change

Transformation succeeds when people feel equipped and supported—



# Transformational Leadership: Transferable Lessons

The principles of transformational leadership can be applied across different contexts within higher education—from curriculum reform to digital transformation, from faculty development to student engagement initiatives. These transferable lessons provide practical guidance for leaders navigating change.



## Communicate the 'Why'

People support change when they understand its purpose. Articulate not just what will change, but why it matters for students, faculty, and the institution's mission.



## Build Psychological Safety

Create environments where people can voice concerns, ask questions, and express uncertainty without fear of judgment or reprisal.



## Encourage Experimentation

Frame change as a learning process. Pilot initiatives, gather feedback, and iterate based on evidence and experience.



## Co-Create Transformation

Involve stakeholders early and genuinely. Shared ownership emerges when people contribute to shaping the change, not just implementing it.



# Visionary Leadership: Thinking Long-Term

Visionary leadership requires the courage to look beyond immediate pressures and short-term metrics. In an era of rapid change, institutions need leaders who can anticipate future needs whilst remaining grounded in present realities. Visionary leaders ask not just "What do we need to achieve this year?" but "What kind of graduates will society need in ten years? What competencies will matter most?"

## Beyond Short-Term KPIs

Whilst metrics matter, visionary leaders balance accountability with long-term strategic thinking that may not yield immediate measurable results.

## Anticipating Graduate Competencies

Effective leaders scan emerging trends in industry, society, and knowledge to prepare students for jobs and challenges that don't yet exist.

## Aligning with Societal Needs

Universities serve broader purposes beyond workforce preparation—visionary leaders connect institutional mission to pressing social and environmental challenges.

## Direction During Uncertainty

When external circumstances are volatile, visionary leadership provides stability through clear direction and unwavering commitment to core values.



# Translating Vision into Strategy

A compelling vision without strategic execution remains an aspiration. The challenge for higher education leaders is bridging the gap between inspiring future possibilities and concrete institutional action. This requires translating broad vision into specific initiatives, aligning resources, and building shared ownership across the institution.

01

## Curriculum & Outcomes Alignment

Ensure programme design reflects future competencies—embed critical thinking, adaptability, and ethical reasoning throughout learning experiences.

02

## Faculty Development

Invest in building educator capacity through professional development, pedagogical training, and opportunities for scholarly growth.

03

## Strategic Partnerships

Cultivate relationships with industry, community organisations, and peer institutions to enrich learning and expand institutional impact.

04

## Shared Ownership

Vision gains traction when stakeholders see themselves reflected in it—create opportunities for input, feedback, and collaborative refinement.



Strategic execution requires patience, persistence, and continuous communication. Leaders must assess progress, and adapt strategies based on emerging evidence and changing contexts.



# Coaching Leadership: Developing Human Capital

Institutions are only as strong as the people within them. Coaching leadership recognises that investing in human development is not a secondary priority—it is the foundation of institutional excellence and sustainability. This approach views every interaction as an opportunity for growth, every challenge as a teaching moment.



## Faculty as Future Leaders

Identify and nurture leadership potential among faculty. Provide opportunities for responsibility, decision-making, and professional development that prepare them for broader institutional roles.



## Students as Learning Partners

Move beyond traditional hierarchies to recognise students as co-creators of educational experiences. Their insights and perspectives enrich institutional practices.



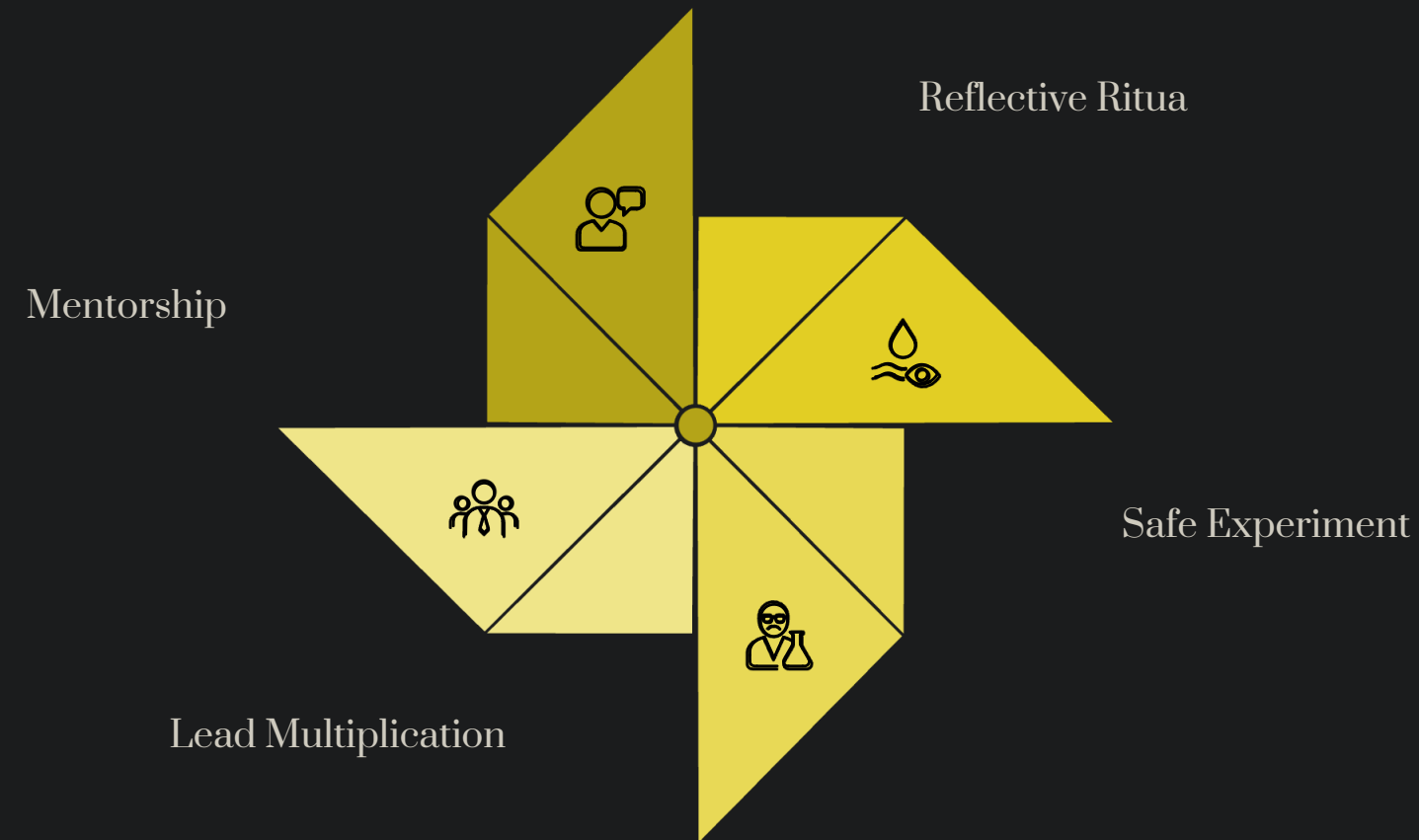
## Feedback as Growth Tool

Create cultures where feedback flows in multiple directions—not just top-down evaluation, but genuine dialogue for mutual learning and improvement.



# Creating a Coaching Culture

A coaching culture is one where development is embedded in daily practice, not reserved for formal performance reviews or training events. It requires intentional design, modelling from senior leaders, and systems that support continuous learning at all levels of the institution.



Building this culture takes time and sustained commitment. Leaders must model vulnerability, share their own learning journeys, and celebrate growth over perfection. When coaching becomes institutional DNA, the entire community becomes stronger, more resilient, and better equipped to navigate complexity.

## Mentorship & Peer Learning

Formalise mentoring relationships and create peer learning networks where colleagues support each other's development through shared experience.

## Reflective Practice

Build reflection into institutional rhythms—debriefs after major initiatives, regular check-ins, and structured opportunities to learn from experience.

## Safe Spaces for Growth

Innovation requires the freedom to fail. Create environments where calculated risks are encouraged and setbacks are treated as learning opportunities.

## Leadership Multiplication

The ultimate measure of coaching leadership is not individual success, but how many new leaders emerge and thrive throughout the institution.



# Servant Leadership: Leadership with Humility

Servant leadership inverts traditional hierarchies, placing service to others at the centre of leadership practice. In higher education, where expertise and authority are often highly valued, this approach can feel counter-cultural—yet it is profoundly powerful. Servant leaders recognise that their role is not to be served, but to enable others to flourish.



## Service Before Authority

Leadership is earned through contribution, not claimed through position. Servant leaders prioritise the needs of their community over personal advancement.



## Empathy & Active Listening

Understanding begins with genuine curiosity. Servant leaders listen deeply, seek to understand diverse perspectives, and respond with compassion.



## Ethical Decision-Making

Every decision is evaluated through the lens of fairness, inclusion, and long-term impact on all stakeholders, especially the most vulnerable.



## Trust as Foundation

Trust cannot be demanded—it must be earned through consistent integrity, transparency, and demonstrated commitment to community wellbeing.

This leadership philosophy is particularly relevant in academic contexts, where intellectual humility and openness to diverse viewpoints are core scholarly values. Servant leaders model these values not just in research and teaching, but in governance and institutional practice.

When leaders serve authentically, they create environments where others feel valued, heard, and empowered to contribute their best work. This foundation of trust becomes the bedrock upon which all other leadership approaches are built.



# Servant Leadership in Academic Practice

Servant leadership manifests in concrete, daily practices that shape institutional culture. These are not abstract principles, but tangible commitments that leaders demonstrate through consistent action and authentic presence within the academic community.



## Student-Centred Learning Environments

Decisions about curriculum, resources, and policies are evaluated first and foremost by their impact on student learning, wellbeing, and success. Students' voices are actively sought and genuinely valued in shaping educational experiences.



## Ethical Governance

Institutional decisions are made transparently, with clear rationale communicated to stakeholders. Ethical considerations—not just pragmatic ones—guide resource allocation, policy development, and strategic priorities.

These practices create institutional cultures characterised by mutual respect, shared purpose, and collective responsibility. When people feel genuinely cared for, they are more likely to extend that care to students, colleagues, and the broader community.



## Faculty Wellbeing & Support

Recognising that educators cannot pour from empty cups, servant leaders prioritise faculty mental health, workload balance, and professional satisfaction. Support systems are robust and accessible, not just reactive.



## Leader Visibility & Approachability

Servant leaders are present in the spaces where work happens—classrooms, laboratories, staff rooms. They maintain open-door policies not as mere gestures, but as genuine invitations for dialogue and connection.



# Integrating the Four Leadership Styles

The power of the Blended Leadership Framework lies not in mastering each style in isolation, but in developing the wisdom to know which approach serves each unique situation. Effective leaders move fluidly between these modes, sometimes within a single day or conversation, adapting to the needs of the moment whilst maintaining coherence and authenticity.



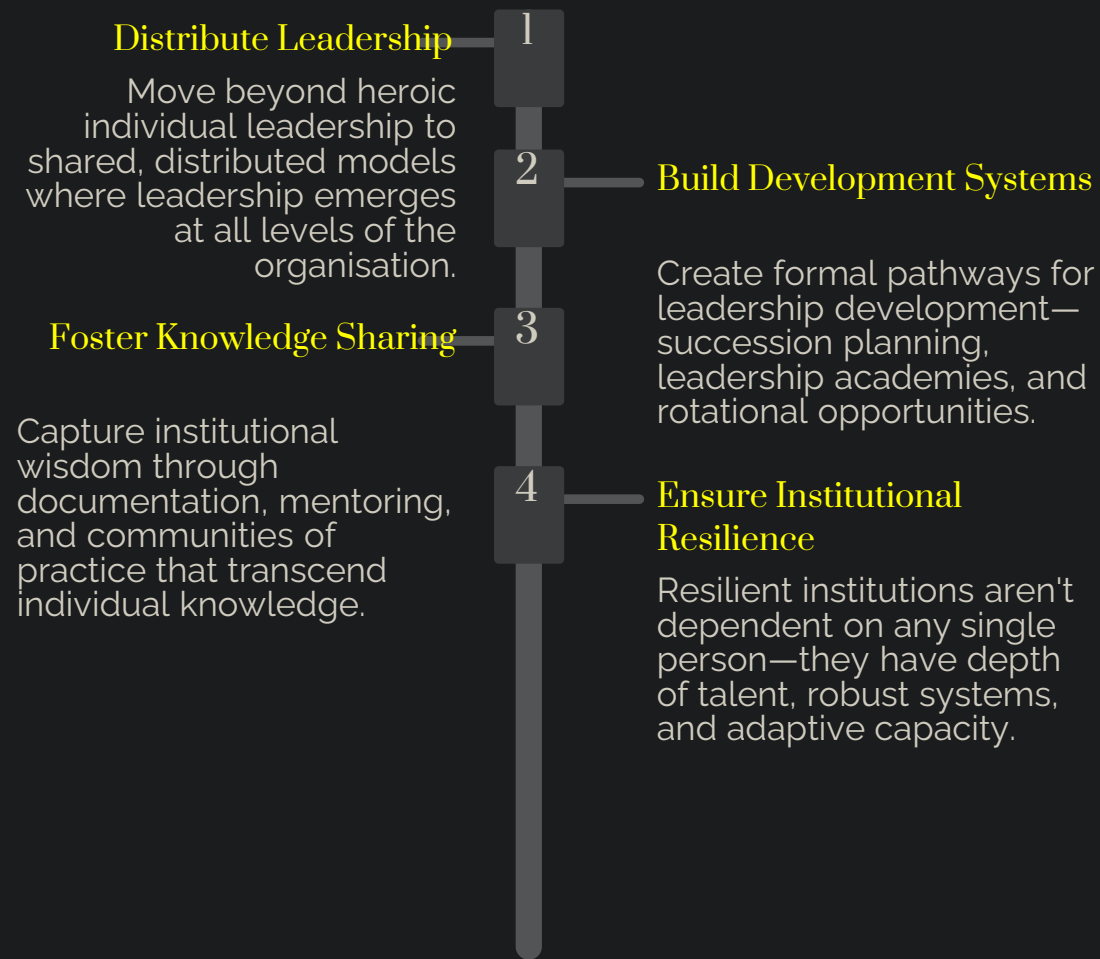
Consider a dean facing budget constraints: a servant leader listens deeply to faculty concerns; a visionary leader articulates how difficult choices serve long-term institutional mission; a transformational leader inspires creative problem-solving; a coaching leader helps department heads develop their own leadership skills to navigate the challenge.

This is situational leadership at its finest—not reactive or inconsistent, but intentionally adaptive. The question is never "What kind of leader am I?" but rather "What kind of leadership does this moment require?"



# Leadership Multiplication & Sustainability

The ultimate test of leadership is not what happens whilst you're in position, but what continues after you've moved on. Sustainable leadership creates systems, cultures, and capabilities that outlast any individual tenure. It's about building leadership capacity throughout the institution, not concentrating it at the top.



Leadership multiplication means intentionally developing others, creating opportunities for emerging leaders to practise and grow, and celebrating their successes as enthusiastically as your own.

When leadership is truly multiplied, the institution becomes more innovative, responsive, and capable. Decisions are better because more perspectives inform them. Change happens more smoothly because capacity exists throughout the system. The institution becomes truly learning-centred—not just for students, but for everyone within it.

This is the legacy that matters most: not the projects you launched or the metrics you improved, but the leaders you enabled and the culture of learning you helped to create.



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UNIVERSITY OF PUTHISAstra RANKED NO. 1 AMONG ALL CAMBODIAN UNIVERSITIES IN AD SCIENTIFIC INDEX



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ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

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STUDENT SATISFACTION

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# Reflection & Take-Home Message

As we conclude this exploration of blended leadership, we return to fundamental questions that should guide our ongoing development as higher education leaders. These questions are not meant to be answered once, but revisited regularly throughout our leadership journeys.

## Leadership is Continuous Practice

There is no arrival point where we've "mastered" leadership. Every day offers new opportunities to learn, adapt, and grow. Our willingness to remain students of leadership determines our effectiveness as leaders.

## Adaptation is Strength

In dynamic environments, rigidity is a liability. The ability to read context, adjust approach, and remain authentically yourself whilst adapting to circumstances is a core leadership competency.

## Developing Others is Ultimate Impact

Your greatest contribution will not be measured by what you achieved, but by how many others you enabled to achieve. Leadership multiplication is the highest form of leadership practice.

## What Leaders Are We Enabling Next?

This is the question that should guide our daily choices: Are we creating conditions where the next generation of leaders can emerge, develop, and eventually surpass our own contributions? Are we leaving institutions stronger and more capable than we found them?

The future of higher education depends not on any individual leader, but on the collective capacity we build together. May we lead with wisdom and unwavering commitment to those we serve.



# Thank You Terima Kasih

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