HIDDEN LEADERSHIP: EXPLORING THE ASSUMPTIONS THAT DEFINE FURTHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP 2018

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Unleashing leadership

Exploring the hidden assumptions that determine and limit leadership practice to unleash new leadership possibilities across the further education system

This FETL–sponsored research project was led by Dr Simon Western, CEO of Analytic-Network Coaching Ltd. The report was written by Simon Western, supported by Helen Shaw. The research team that conducted the focus groups and telephone interviews comprised Helen Shaw, Ben Neal and Simon Western. Sandra Logan acted as project administrator, overseeing the whole project finances and administration. Details of other contributors and biographical notes on researchers can be found in Appendix 3.

Introduction

4. Analysis of research data

Synopsis

1.1. Research aims and context

The stated research aims of this research project were to:

> Explore the hidden assumptions that determine and limit leadership practice, with the aim of unleashing new leadership potential across the FE system.

The project set out to explore the unconscious biases and preferences that shape how leadership is thought about, developed and practised in FE. Revealing hidden leadership discourses[1] allows practitioners to see beyond the normative patterns that entrap and limit their leadership potential. The new insights gained enable leaders, team-players and followers to review their practices and engage differently. Discovering hidden leadership assumptions, and at the same time learning about different leadership approaches, unleashes a new leadership dynamic that can be the 'difference that makes the difference' (Bateson, 1972). A key aim of the project was to engage people across the FE sector in reviewing where they are now and clarifying where they aspire to be, while offering some recommendations as to how to get there, focusing on leadership as the agent of change.

The leadership context

Leadership is a problematic subject. Mainstream leadership books, articles and training courses often produce idealised leadership approaches, fads and rhetoric, which are turned into vision statements, grandiose speeches and development training programmes, and produce reductionist competency or skills frameworks (Bolden and Gosling, 2006). A problem arises when these idealised leadership approaches clash with the very different leadership–followership dynamics that employees experience in their everyday lives. If a senior team shows controlling, top–down leadership and yet talks about distributing leadership and empowerment, it is experienced as yet another form of 'fake news'. These 'fantasy' leadership theories and practices stimulate a mixture of disbelief and ironic smiles, and employees quickly become disillusioned when espoused theories

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[1] The term 'discourse' is explained in *Section 3.1*

clash with the realities they experience. The FE context, like most other sectors, is awash with idealised leadership theories and ideas, and our task is to take a fresh look beyond the rhetoric to try to find the hidden leadership assumptions that determine and limit leadership practice as it currently exists.

Researching leadership

This research project starts from the bottom–up, rather than taking top–down leadership ideas and trying to fit them to the sector (these theories and practices mainly come from global consultancies and leading US business schools). Our approach is to 'begin from the beginning' and collect empirical and qualitative data on the hidden leadership assumptions that underpin how leadership is perceived and thought about in FE, and how these assumptions and discourses shape what actually takes place in practice.

Researching how leadership approaches have changed due to social, political and economic factors over the past century (Western, 2010, 2013, 2019) and later researching global leadership perspectives (2018), Simon Western found that four core leadership discourses currently dominate how we (often unconsciously) think about and practise leadership. These four approaches, the controller, therapist, messiah and Eco-Leadership discourses, inform the way leadership is thought about and practised. These discourses work largely beneath our conscious awareness, shaping how we think about leadership and how we act as both leaders and followers. Leadership is often discussed as though we share a common understanding of it, yet there are hidden and conflicting narratives and assumptions about what we believe leadership to be. These four normative discourses interact with each other, either in an integrated, dynamic and positive way, or in a disruptive and dysfunctional way. Two key questions arise when studying leadership in organisations and sectors. First, which of the four leadership discourses are best suited to the organisation or

sector, and which combination delivers the best results? For example, should the organisation have a dominant Messiah Leadership or Eco-Leadership approach, and which other leadership approaches/discourses are important to deliver success? Second, how can the four discourses be aligned and integrated to get the best balance of leadership, drawing on the strengths and acknowledging the challenges of each different discourse/approach?

How we conceptualise leadership determines how we practise leadership. Our collective leadership perceptions define how ambitious we are, how we understand organisational dynamics, what our purpose is, and, perhaps most importantly, how each organisation and the sector engages and mobilises its staff to maximise their talent, commitment and potential. For example, if our perceptions and expectations of leadership are of a Controller Leadership approach with authoritarian tendencies, there is little chance that middle managers and teaching staff will show initiative, take creative risks or develop their talent and take up distributed leadership roles. More likely, they will spend a lot of time blaming the bad leaders upstairs and absolving themselves of any responsibility for changing things. Alternatively, if there is a very charismatic messiah leader, this may initially inspire staff to follow their vision, but will also create a dependency culture, with followers waiting to receive instructions or 'a message' from the 'messiah' leader.

Leadership matters, it really matters; yet, we so often repeat patterns and errors because we cannot escape the hidden discourses that entrap us. This research aims to address this challenge. The findings help to identify where the sector is now and the aspirations for future leadership development possibilities. Our final recommendations will invite reflection on possible ways forward.

1.2 Leadership terms

A more in-depth summary of the leadership discourses is set out in *Section 2*. However, for purposes of understanding the synopsis below, this brief summary of terms will help.

- *Controller Leadership Discourse*

  Leadership focusing on clarifying tasks and setting performance targets. The core leadership aim is to maximise efficiency and improve productivity through tightly controlling resources (including human resources). This discourse emerged initially during the industrial revolution, utilising science and rationality to deliver manufacturing progress.

- *Therapist Leadership Discourse*

  Leadership focusing on people dynamics, i.e. on relationships and motivating individuals and teams. This discourse emerged initially in the post-Second World War democratising movements and became dominant post-1960s, underpinned by the human relations movement and the counter-cultural focus on individuality and the shift towards the 'celebrated-self' (Western, 2012).

- *Messiah Leadership Discourse*

  Transformational and charismatic leaders focusing on setting visions and creating strong loyal cultures. This discourse emerged as a specific response to economic problems in the USA in the 1980s. It goes beyond normative heroic leadership, with special attention paid to charismatic leaders who engineer culture (Kunda, 1992). Strong leaders develop 'cult-like' organisational cultures (Peters and Waterman, 1982) delivering self-managed, dynamic and conformist corporate cultures.

- *Eco-Leadership discourse*

  The most contemporary leadership discourse, focusing on distributing leadership throughout the whole organisation, and realising the connectivity and inter-dependent nature of today's global world. It emerged at the beginning of the 21st century in response to the digital age and disruptive network society. Eco-leaders strive for adaptive organisations that can respond to external change. To achieve this, they disperse leadership from the centre to the edges, and pay attention to wider social, economic and technological changes.

1.3 Headline findings

*Therapist and Eco-Leadership models dominate the sector*

The research revealed that two distinct leadership approaches were dominant in the FE sector. These were the Therapist Leadership Discourse and the Eco-Leadership discourse. What was interesting was how these two complementary approaches reversed their order at different stages of the research. Our initial online survey produced what we have called *actual results.* These are the empirical data results taken from the online survey reflecting which leadership discourses were preferred and practised in the sector. The *aspirational results* reflect the research findings taken from the focus groups which were asked 'to identify the ideal mix and balance of discourses required to take their organisation forward', which is to say they were asked to which leadership approaches they aspired.

- **Actual results** from the online survey showed the two leading discourses were:

  Therapist Leadership (45 per cent) followed by **Eco-Leadership (27 per cent,** combined 72 per cent)

- **Aspirational results** from the focus groups on the leadership aspired to were:

  Eco-Leadership (36 per cent) followed by **therapist (29 per cent)** (combined 65 per cent)

Actual results

The quantitative research findings in *Figure 1* show all individual responses to the online

questionnaire (www.hiddenleadership.com). The results showed that the dominant leadership

discourse in the FE sector was the therapist discourse at a strong 45 per cent. This was followed by

the Eco-Leadership discourse (27 per cent), messiah discourse (17 per cent) and controller discourse

(11 per cent).

Figure 1. Whole sector discourses
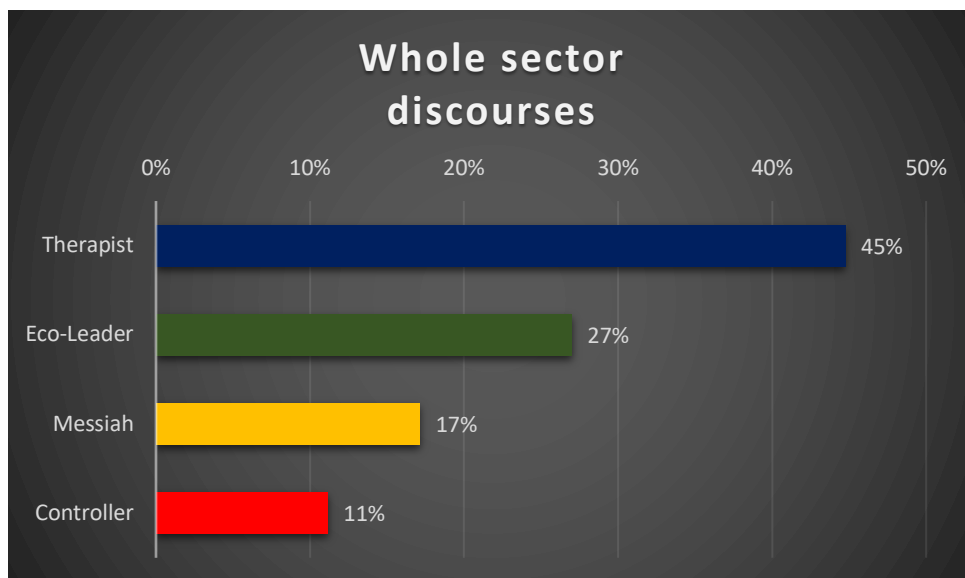
While all four discourses are present in the FE sector, the dominance of the Therapist Leadership

Discourse in the survey responses suggests a preference for humanistic, relational and supportive

leadership approaches. It also shows that the sector sees leadership mainly in personal and

relational terms; leaders are thought of in terms of individuals influencing teams and individuals.

This clearly has its strengths, but it also lacks a perspective where leaders take a more strategic,

visionary and distributed dimension to leadership. Therapist leaders can be emotionally intelligent,

supportive, nurturing and motivating, but they can also be inward-looking and create 'nurturing and

dependency cultures', missing the capacity to engage strategically in the bigger picture. Our research

found that this outward and strategic approach to leading organisations requires more development.

The second most preferred approach in our actual findings, was the Eco-Leadership discourse with 27 per cent of the responses. The Eco-Leadership discourse complements the therapist discourse well. Eco-Leadership focuses on connectivity and distributing leadership within organisations. Eco-leaders see their organisation as an ecosystem of interdependent parts and therefore take a more strategic position. Eco-leaders also realise that organisations are best understood as 'eco-systems within wider eco-systems' (Western, 2013), that is that as leaders they have to look both at the internal ecosystems and connections in the organisation and at the external ecosystems that impact on them. These include stakeholders but also wider social trends, sector regulations and technological and social disruptions. This latter perspective is often lacking as leaders become inwardly focused on their all-consuming internal demands. Leadership discourses never operate in isolation, and the results showing that therapist and Eco-Leadership had a combined preference of 72 per cent meant that these two discourses dominate the sector in a very particular way.

Figure 2. Comparison of whole sector discourses and aspirational leadership discourses
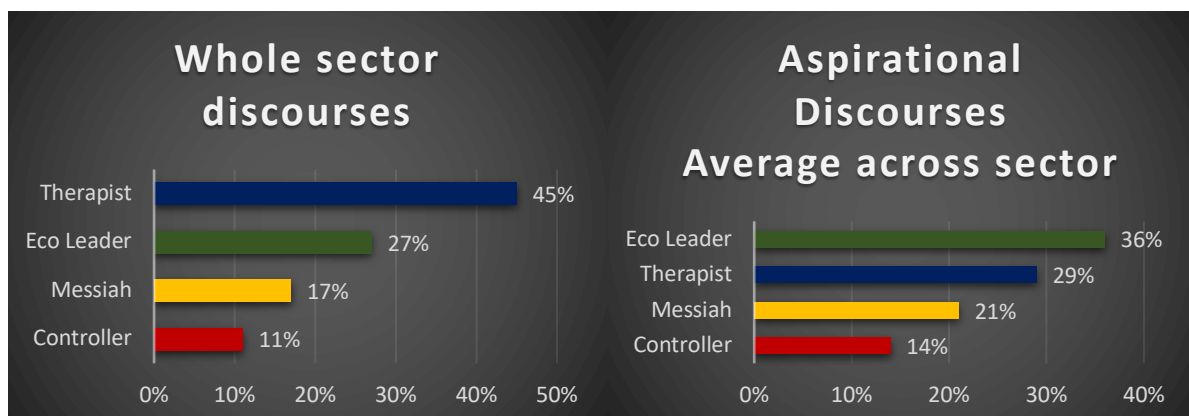
Aspirational leadership discourses

Eco-Leadership model as the aspirational discourse

- Eco-Leadership discourse (36 per cent)
- Therapist discourse (29 per cent)
- Messiah discourse (21 per cent)
- Controller discourse (14 per cent)

While the actual results from our quantitative research showed a dominant Therapist Leadership

Discourse followed by the Eco-Leadership discourse, revealing the current picture in the sector, the

follow-up qualitative research we undertook in the focus groups showed interesting parallels (see

Section 4). Each organisation we worked with discussed their online actual results, then, following in-

depth explorations and discussions, were asked what their aspirational leadership model would be

to make their organisation more successful. In all but one of the organisations, their aspirational

leadership model was the Eco-Leadership discourse over Therapist Leadership which moved from

first to second place. In the one exception, Therapist Leadership remained in first place, but the Eco-

Leadership discourse result rose from 22 per cent to 30 per cent.

The overall aspired results inverted the therapist dominance, placing Eco-Leadership as the most

important leadership discourse. This finding is significant because it provides an indicator for the

future direction of leadership in FE sector. It also reveals how the developmental, open and

informative leadership dialogues that took place in the focus groups, broadened and changed

individual preferences. Through learning from others, sharing experiences and exploring leadership

in context, with a facilitator in an open but structured form, views on preferred leadership

approaches can change. This finding informs our research recommendation for a sector-wide 'big

leadership conversation' (BLC) (see *Section 5*).

The shift from Therapist Leadership to Eco-Leadership as the leading discourse signifies a realisation

that, in today's networked and disruptive society, new forms of leadership and new forms of

organisation are urgently required. Following discussion, relational, humane, authentic and motivational leaders (therapist) remained highly-valued in the sector, however, it was recognised that to address future challenges, much more is required.

Three key findings

From our research dialogues in the FE sector, we have highlighted how the aspiration towards Eco-Leadership points to the desire and perceived need for three key changes:

1. **A radical redistribution of leadership.** This is required to ensure that leadership shifts from a focus on people holding positions of power in hierarchies, to leadership being distributed throughout the whole organisation. This shift would unleash the untapped potential and energy of employees, make the organisation more adaptive to change and more responsive to students, raising engagement levels of students, staff and other stakeholders in the network.

2. **Connecting internal ecosystems.** A much greater connectivity within organisations and joined-up thinking across the sector is urgently required. More strategic, integrative and holistic thinking is needed in the sector.

3. **Eco-Leadership in external ecosystems.** The demands from external pressures on FE colleges and organisations were a constant theme during the research. The aspiration to take an Eco-Leadership approach marks a desire to shift from passively responding to external demands, to influencing and shaping the future from within the sector itself. This means showing leadership (rather than followership) in external ecosystems, and re-thinking how organisations, locally, regionally and nationally, engage with external regulators, political influencers and governance bodies. It means thinking strategically, learning how to lead in new ways to influence networks and stakeholders. It also means being entrepreneurial, observing technological and social changes and seeing new creative opportunities early. Connecting with community and workplaces in new dynamic ways will

be a required part of an Eco-Leadership response. It will mean showing leadership and developing new services, collaborating with others and finding new business models and ways to engage, i.e. being part of a much wider network and adapting to change more responsively.

Other key findings

With the therapist discourse also popular in the research, the sector also recognises the following:

- **Relational and humanistic leadership approaches remain vitally important.** In an education and lifelong learning sector based on developing people, the results show that Therapist Leadership approaches remain central to the success of the sector.

- **Messiah Leadership is no longer as popular as it has been in the past.** Messiah and Controller Leadership Discourses both had low results in the actual and aspirational findings; in the research findings from the questionnaire Messiah Leadership showed 17 per cent, and Controller Leadership, 11 per cent; the aspirational findings showed Messiah Leadership with 21 per cent and Controller Leadership with 14 per cent. In many other sectors previously researched, Messiah Leadership is still placed as the first choice; for example Western found Messiah Leadership was the leading discourse across 20 diverse countries and regions (2018). The lower score for Messiah Leadership in the FE sector is a positive indicator, as it shows the sector recognises that transformational leaders are not the fantasy saviour figures once imagined. Perhaps this is a result of poor experiences in the past when transformational leadership was popular – as one participant put it:

> In an era of doing more for less, faith had been put into messianic leaders with sometimes disastrous results.

The sector recognises that more collaborative and distributed forms of leadership are necessary. The low findings for Messiah Leadership were discussed in the focus groups, and

it was generally recognised that small but significant inputs from messiah leaders were necessary to focus and clarify the organisations' vision and purpose, and to work to create strong and resilient cultures.

- **Controller Leadership also scored low in both actual and aspirational findings**. Just 11 per cent and 14 per cent respectively preferred Controller Leadership, showing that leadership via control methods is not favoured. Interestingly, however, across the sector, the research discussions revealed a) that Controller Leadership was perhaps under-represented in the findings due to people not wanting to acknowledge its presence in themselves or others; and b) that Controller Leadership has an important aspect that is not always valued, that is, being disciplined in carefully controlling finances and resources and focusing on meeting important service and performance targets. The focus group discussions revealed that Controller Leadership aligned with bureaucracy and authoritarianism was unwelcome, but Controller Leadership that focused on efficiency, reducing waste, carefully controlling finances and meeting performance targets was an asset. Many thought a re-evaluation of how Controller Leadership features in FE was necessary.

Finally, it was recognised across the sector that all leadership discourses are necessary, it is not a binary situation of right and wrong discourses. The new balance of leadership, with a strong Eco-Leadership dominance as identified in the aspirational leadership findings, offers an exciting way forward for the sector.

2. Methodology

2.1 Overview

We used a phenomenological-informed research design, focusing on the meaning of leadership in each specific context, in contrast to trying to find an objective truth about leadership in FE. Our research method was chosen to help us better understand what is happening in the sector through

inductive enquiry. We developed the ideas via multiple methods of data collection including quantitative, empirical and qualitative research to establish different perspectives. The research design also draws on co-operative enquiry (Reason, 1999), 'focusing on the experiences and explanations of individuals concerned … thus subjects become partners in the research' (cited in Easterby-Smith, 2012: 34). The research process had six different stages, set out in *Section 2.3*.

2.2. Selection of organisations for research

Our aim was to attract a diverse selection of organisations in FE. Our requirements for organisations to participate are set out below in *Table 1* – this was used in our marketing of the research project.

Table 1. Your contribution

Your contribution
You will be invited to participate in 4 simple stages of the research process: - The college/organisation leadership agree to participate and select 30–80 individuals they believe will benefit from leadership development and meet our selection criteria. The individuals will represent a cross-section from all levels within the organisation.   - Individual participants take a 15-minute online leadership questionnaire (www.hiddenleadership.com) for which they will receive a comprehensive personalised leadership report.   10 per cent of individuals will be selected for a qualitative research interview (30–60 minutes).   - A one- to two-hour- focus group discussion will take place with a selected group of 8–12 people.

Recruitment of organisations

We recruited participants through four means: 1. We attended the Association of Colleges (AOC) national conference, setting up a stand to display the FETL research project, and to meet organisational leaders from across the sector; 2. We published articles promoting our research in the FE press – these two initiatives attracted our biggest response; 3. We advertised our research project on the FETL website; 4. We utilised all networks available to us to disseminate our research project as widely as we could.

Diverse representation

We aimed to get a diverse representation of organisations; general further education colleges, independent training providers, sixth form colleges and adult education providers were represented. Regionally, organisations were represented from across England, with one college from Scotland also participating. We made special efforts to recruit from Northern Ireland and Wales, but failed to enlist an organisation from either country. No organisations from these regions responded to our national publications or through our other efforts. We wondered whether the lack of engagement from Northern Ireland and Wales represented something systemic in the FE sector and about those at the regional margins. We have left out the names of the organisations in order to maintain anonymity.

We exceeded our requirements, initially recruiting 11 organisations and overachieving on our individual questionnaire targets. Two organisations failed to complete enough individual surveys and were unable to complete the full research process. We continued with nine organisations which completed the stages below.

2.3. Six stages of the research process

1. **Initial research design** building on our previous leadership research experience, and then focusing on the specific context of the FE sector. Our design aim was to create a learning experience for participants, that also made them partners in the action-research experience.

2. **Quantitative and empirical data collection** using the 'Western indicator of leadership discourses' (WILD) leadership online questionnaire. WILD has been verified and tested using over 1000 samples and is based on doctoral and published academic research (see www.hiddenleadership.com).

   Individuals from selected organisations were invited to complete this online questionnaire, receiving a personal leadership report. The online questionnaire asks individuals to rank answers about leadership, giving their preferences on which different leadership approaches are preferred in given contexts and scenarios. The report gives them the results of their hidden leadership preferences, reflecting where they fit in the four leadership discourses. This individual data was collected and divided into categories we could analyse, first by the college or organisation so we could get results for each institution. We then sorted the results into gender, age, seniority and teaching and non-teaching roles (based on self-definition by participants).

   Qualitative research

3. **Telephone interviews** with 10 per cent of the sample who took the WILD questionnaire. The sample group we selected aimed to be a cross-section taking into account gender and level of seniority. We used a semi-structured questionnaire (see *Appendix 1*) and utilised a co-operative research approach, taking information from the telephone interviews to help shape what research questions should be discussed in the focus groups.

4. **Focus groups.** We invited 8–12 people to the focus groups, a cross-section of those participating in the research project (taking into account gender and level of seniority). The focus group was carefully designed to promote a working-group dynamic and get more textured and layered insights. We used three different approaches that can be found in *Appendix 2.*

5. **Researchers' analysis of all data** across the three methods in each college and organisation to provide a detailed report for each organisation.

6. **Final report writing.** Having analysed the specific data for each organisation, we analysed all data across colleges and organisations, to provide general conclusions for a national report on the hidden leadership in FE.

3. The four discourses of leadership: A framework for understanding leadership

3.1 Overview

This section gives an overview of the different leadership discourses used in this research project.

Figure 3. The discourses of leadership
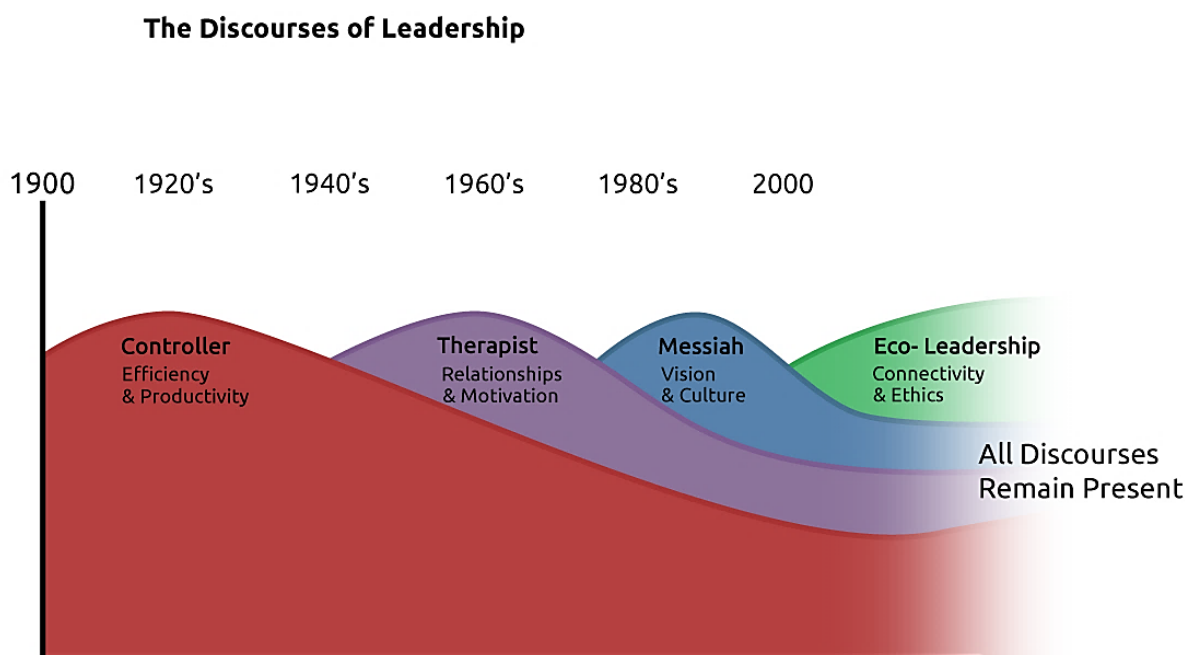
The four discourses of leadership used in this research project emerged from Western's doctoral research and have since been published (2010, 2011, 2013), cited widely and utilised in post-graduate courses and business schools internationally. These discourses have recently been used to research how leadership approaches differ across the globe, analysing countries to find how the discourses play out in each (Western and Garcia, 2018). Used in the leadership questionnaire, they

represent a heuristic methodology, rather than a psychometric test, that aims to provide a framework for thinking and a shared language to discuss leadership, that takes it beyond a discussion about skills and competencies.

All discourses are present in all organisations (and in all of us to different degrees). They blur and mix together in the FE sector, sometimes helpfully and sometimes in a confusing and dysfunctional way. For example, often we find a rhetoric of leadership that uses the therapist discourse language, being more relational, listening, authentic, improving team dynamics, using coaching skills as a manager/leader, and so on. This can be problematic when the employees experience this rhetoric in sharp contrast to Controller Leadership in practice, where they feel driven by numbers and targets, not listened to or able to find time to be relational, etc.

The task for leaders is to try to get the right balance of leadership in their particular context. The task for the senior leadership team is to take up an Eco-Leadership meta-position and ensure the right balance of leadership discourses are enacted across the whole-organisation system. In this sense, Eco-Leadership stands apart from the other discourses, as the eco-leader takes a more systemic and strategic overview than the other discourses; for example, ensuring the right balance between keeping appropriate control of resources and finances, ensuring everyone is task-focused, the data is good and targets are being met (controller discourse) has to be balanced to ensure the organisation is very human and individuals and teams are motivated (therapist discourse), that there is a clear vision and purpose for the organisation, with a strong organisational identity and culture (messiah discourse) and, finally, that people are well-connected in the organisation (sharing best practice and knowledge) and that attention is paid to external factors that impact (Eco-Leadership).

The material below, summarising the four discourses, is adapted from *Global leadership perspectives, insights and analysis* (Western and Garcia, 2018: 190).

The leadership discourses used are a useful heuristic methodology. Each leadership discourse is not 'good' or 'bad' and the discourses are not exclusive. One discourse can dominate, but others are always present in different weightings within a given leadership setting. Discourses are not neat and succinct categories and boundaries blur as leadership is fluid, not fixed.

3.2 What is a discourse?

Over the past century, four key discourses have emerged that dominate leadership thinking. A discourse in this sense is an underlying set of assumptions that becomes accepted as the norm. It affects and shapes our views about something. For many people, leadership means a heroic charismatic figure, but there are other discourses of leadership. These determine how leadership is enacted and spoken about, but they are not always explicitly known to us. Discourse is related to power, as a way to control and normalise ways of thinking and being; as Judith Butler says, discourse defines the 'limits of acceptable speech' (2004: 64). A discourse determines what can be said and also what cannot be said, it impacts on our views, our self-perceptions; it is not possible to escape discourse.

This method of discourse analysis provides a way of thinking about leadership rather than a way defining what leadership is, or how a leader should or does act. It is a heuristic way of opening leadership up for reflection. This discourse analysis method has been tried and tested in practice across multiple international settings, in diverse sectors and with different levels of leaders and followers. Each time it has been used, the results have provoked deep thinking and reflection which is the purpose of the methodology. When applied to the country chapters in this book, the discourses were used with more openness to variants in culture than as described in the original
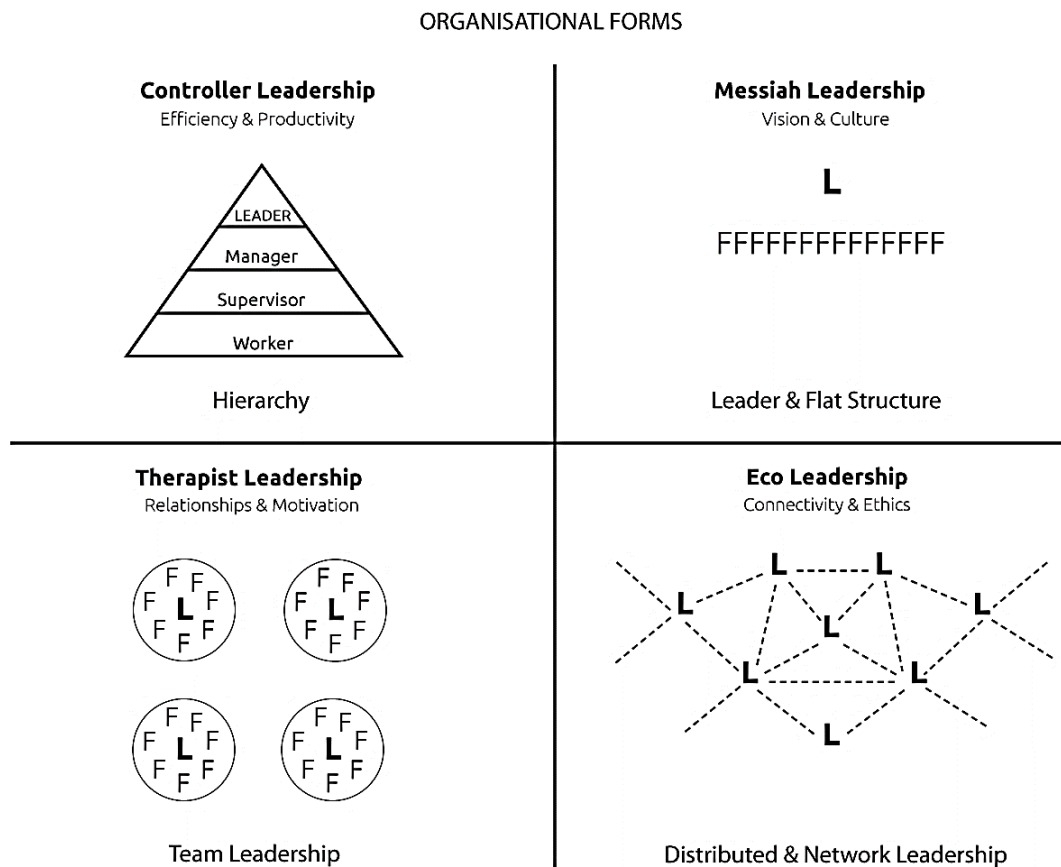
research findings. This was to enable non-westernised applications of leadership to find their own expressions where possible. Where leadership approaches didn't fit or sat outside of these normative westernised discourses, we put in the following section 'Outsider Leadership Approaches'.

Timeline

Controller Leadership Discourse reflected the industrial leadership at the turn of the 20th century, that utilised science and rationality to improve productivity. Therapist Leadership became more dominant in post-war Europe and USA, reflecting a democratisation of the workplace, a re-focusing of leadership on motivation rather than coercion and control of employees, and a focus on individuality and emotions at work. It became dominant after the post-1960s counter-culture heralded in therapy culture and the workplace became a key site for self-actualisation and personal development (Maslow, 1968). Due to an economic slump and the rise of the Asian economies, the dominance of Therapist Leadership gave way to Messiah Leadership, focusing on how transformational leaders could inspire employees with grand visions, and create strong loyal and committed cultures that would challenge the Asian economies which relied on collectivist culture as a way of leveraging success (Bass, 1985, 1998). Finally, at the beginning of the new millennium the rise of a new Eco-Leadership discourse emerged. This reflected the network society (Castells, 2000, 2012) and the realisation that we were entering a new paradigm whereby the machine metaphor for organisations in the 20th century was giving way to a new organisational metaphor, the eco-system. Globalisation and new informational technology created a more interconnected and interdependent world, which demanded new organisational forms and new leadership.

Figure 4 offers an image of the classic organisational structure that each leadership discourse produces.

Figure 4. Organisational forms

ORGANISATIONAL FORMS

Controller Leadership
Efficiency & Productivity

Hierarchy

Messiah Leadership
Vision & Culture

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Leader & Flat Structure

Therapist Leadership
Relationships & Motivation

Team Leadership

Eco Leadership
Connectivity & Ethics

Distributed & Network Leadership

We will now briefly offer an overview of each discourse.

3.3 Controller Leadership Discourse

'Efficiency through control'

The first leadership discourse that emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century is the

controller leader. The Controller Leadership Discourse is born from scientific rationalism and the

industrial revolution, standardisation and mechanisation creating the mass production of the

factory. The controller leader operates as a technocratic leader whose sole aim is to exert

environmental control of both human and other resources in order to maximise production

efficiency and effectiveness.

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Traditionally in industrial settings, employees were treated as replaceable human resources to be controlled and to act as 'cogs-in-the-wheel' of the efficient organisational machine. Time and motion studies and division of labour meant that unskilled labour was utilised on production lines which maximised efficiencies and enabled mass production of goods to take place. Cars and other consumer goods became available due to these practices and Controller Leadership proved hugely successful. Industrial leaders introduced management control systems with great effect. According to Peter Drucker, 'management's greatest achievement of the century was to increase the productivity of manual workers fifty-fold' (cited by Rainer, 2000).

Controller Leadership then migrated to the bureaucratic office, where each employee knew their place and had set tasks to fulfil, with mixed success. After a period of demise, Controller Leadership is on the rise again in new contexts, such as the gig economy, due to computer technologies that enable us to measure everything and produce vast amounts of data. This produces a new form of Controller Leadership which imposes 'control by numbers' and creates audit culture (Power, 1997) and target-setting; in today's workplace employees can be surveyed and controlled like never before.

While Controller Leadership is vital, i.e. controlling finance and resources, focusing on efficiency and utilising scientific rationalism, the shadow side is that it can produce de-humanising workplaces that diminish individual autonomy and creativity. When target culture and short-term performance dominate leadership thinking, it can lead to a rigid organisation that is unable to adapt, to be strategic or agile, and this can be very problematic in today's fast-changing organisational context. When the efficient ends become more important than the means by which they are attained, serious problems arise.

Good examples of Controller Leadership today are McDonalds, Starbucks, Ryanair and other budget airlines that focus on maximising efficiency to reduce costs and offer mass transport or food of a standardised and uniform quality at very cheap prices. The maxim for today's controller leader is: 'If you can't count it, it doesn't count', reversing William Cameron's maxim 'Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted' (1963: 13).

Controller leaders are necessary in all organisations. The question is how much of this leadership approach is required, where in the organisation is it most needed, and how can it integrate and work alongside other leadership approaches, without creating rigid organisations and dehumanising conditions.

The four qualities of Controller Leadership

1. Efficiency

Controller leaders are the direct descendants of Frederick Taylor's efficiency craze, when scientific management was applied to factory work to create mass-production techniques such as the production line. This leadership approach relishes the challenge of making the workplace more efficient, through use of technology, restructuring and work redesign. The focus is on increasing successful output using the minimal resources and costs, and success includes quality-control measures.

2. Task and target focus

Controller leaders are very task-focused and less strategy-focused. They like to have clarity around tasks and know who is going to complete them. Setting clear output and performance targets and measuring the results is how controller leaders like to operate. They don't like anything that gets between a workforce and completing its tasks.

3. Clear systems, roles, processes and structures

Controller leaders strive for clear accountability, systems, processes, roles and responsibilities.

Clarity enables greater accountability and control for the leaders of organisations.

4. Scientific rationalism

Underpinning all of the above is the idea that scientific rationalism will deliver results. Controller leaders like to have facts, measurements and evidence-based results. Whether in a hospital, factory, bank or retail outlet, the controller leader will rely on rationalism and science to deliver success.

The shape of a classic controller-led organisation is the hierarchical pyramid, but we should note that this is changing in contemporary controller-led organisations that utilize Controller Leadership by numbers.

3.4. Therapist Leadership Discourse

'Happy workers are more productive workers'

Therapist leaders take a very humanistic approach to leadership, their focus is people, people and people. We call this the therapist discourse, referencing how therapeutic culture permeates our lives in the West (Rose, 1990; Furedi, 2003), expanding its influence beyond the clinic. Therapist leaders are attracted to these underpinning therapeutic ideas and they work with employees in two main ways. First, they hold a philosophy of the 'celebrated-self' (Western, 2012); they believe that each person has a huge untapped potential and if we overcome our self-doubts, inhibitions and psychological limitations (usually inflicted on us from childhood) we can fully celebrate our true selves and maximise our potential, thereby becoming more effective and productive workers. Second, they often work with the other side of the therapeutic human condition we call the

'wounded-self' (Western, 2012). This relates to the perception that deep within us we are all injured souls, damaged by childhood or some event and that we crave caring for and reparation.

Therapist leaders often espouse a belief in the celebrated-self but are quickly drawn to the wounded-self in practice. Therapist leaders identify with the wounded-self, they feel your pain, and they are sensitive to it and want to make it better. Therapist Leadership emerged in the post-1960s, from the counter-cultural movement that celebrated individualism, emotional expression and privileging the search for happiness. In the workplace, the human relations and human potential movements flourished with Maslow's self-actualising theories (Maslow, 1968) becoming mainstream for HR and leadership training. Today, emotional intelligence and leadership coaching are symbolic of the continuing power of therapeutic leadership.

There are two main challenges that therapist leaders have to work hard to avoid:

- They can easily develop dependent followers, 'we love our leader, s/he is so caring'. This can limit the team and individual's capacity to think independently and challenge the leader.
- They can be over-focused on individuals and their team and don't think strategically, missing the big picture.

Therapist leaders are very necessary in organisations, they can be very caring, insightful and skilful in their people leadership. They manage conflict well, and they see problems arising before they explode. They develop loyal followers, and when working well really get the best from individuals and teams they lead.

The four qualities of Therapist Leadership

1. Self-awareness

Therapist leaders have high levels of self-awareness, which is a key leadership attribute, enabling them to see their strengths and weaknesses, and not be afraid to acknowledge these and work on them and with them to get the best from themselves.

2. Relational dynamics

Having a good understanding of relational dynamics is important as therapist leaders not only focus on individuals, but also look at team dynamics and try to get balanced teams. For example, many of these leaders choose team members on the basis that they are like them. This creates a dangerous scenario of groupthink and limits the team by excluding creative difference. A skilled therapist leader will have the confidence to work with differences, using their skills and understanding of team and relational dynamics to operate through tensions and get the very best from a diverse but strong group.

3. Coaching skills

Therapist leaders are natural coaching leaders; they see the ability to coach and mentor their people as a vital part of their leadership role, and continually work on themselves to strengthen this ability.

4. Developmental focus

Therapist leaders are development addicts! They love training and development and seek opportunities for themselves and their team at any opportunity. Investing in people, they believe, is the key to company success.

3.5. Messiah Leadership Discourse

'Charismatic leaders and strong cultures'

The Messiah Leadership Discourse emerged in the early 1980s and, until around 2000, became the dominant discourse. The Messiah Leadership Discourse signified a new surge in leadership theory and practice as leadership became a very sought-after idea, pushing management into the background. During this period, the compensation of CEOs rose astronomically reflecting the perception that they were messiah leaders. It has two important components that separates it from the idea of the great hero leaders of the past. Messiah Leadership combines individual charismatic leadership alongside the drive to create strong and aligned organisational cultures. This strong culture enables 'culture-control' to take place.

The big idea of Messiah Leadership is that employees follow the leader willingly because they have faith in him/her and in the company vision, so they are committed, loyal and work hard with less need for supervision or coercion to produce results. At its best, this culture control works positively to produce engaged employees working collectively to produce the best outcomes. At its worst, it produces dangerous conformist and dependent cultures that we will discuss later. The word messiah is evocative and comes from research analysis of the transformational leadership literature that made great claims for this new form of leadership, using prophetic and often messianic language. Messiah leaders are usually, but not always, charismatic extroverts; they can also be quiet leaders whose charisma shines through in less obvious ways.

The Messiah Leadership Discourse provides charismatic leadership and a vision of the future, often in the face of a turbulent and uncertain environment. The messiah discourse

has long appealed to individuals and collectively to society, especially in turbulent environments, promising salvation from the chaotic world in which a lack of control is experienced. New purpose and direction is felt under a messiah leader. The great hero leader of the past was critiqued for creating dependency cultures, which created a non-thinking blind loyalty. Devoted soldiers following the charismatic leader into battle willing to give their lives for him/her offered a metaphoric model. Today's messiah leader realises that a dependency culture doesn't work in a modern organisation that relies on employees bringing their knowledge, passion and adaptive thinking to the workplace. M essiah leaders, therefore, attempt to create cultures whereby employees are loyal because they believe in the vision, but where they don't need hierarchical supervision. They work hard and are self-motivated because they have faith in the leader and belief in the company vision. Hierarchical structures are flattened as the need to manage, motivate and control employees diminishes.

These prophetic messiah leaders initially were heralded as creating entrepreneurial and dynamic companies yet, in spite of their aims to avoid dependency cultures, they often created highly conformist cultures. Peters and Waterman's (1982) best-selling book, *In search of excellence*, described the most successful companies as having 'cult-like cultures'. Perhaps the most successful example of a messiah leader was Steve Jobs at Apple, whose employees retained inventiveness yet were fiercely identified with Jobs' vision and the Apple brand. Today's messiah leaders in big companies need not only to present a vision to their employees, but also to customers, clients, shareholders and other stakeholders. They often act as a symbolic figurehead for the brand which can influence share prices more than income streams these days. Steve Jobs, like many charismatic visionaries, was hugely gifted but also a leader with many flaws (Ricks, 2012), as has also been said of Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos (Schwartz, 2015).

The dangers of Messiah Leadership are clear. Messiah leaders, when working well, create strong, dynamic cultures that inspire and energise the workforce. These cultures however often slide into becoming monocultures, whereby anybody who dissents or offers a different view from the leadership position, is seen as being disloyal and is marginalised or pushed out of the company. This creates silent and compliant organisations and when this happens the company loses creativity and initiative, and mistakes or malpractice are not corrected. This can lead to catastrophic failures.

The other challenge for Messiah Leadership is the gap between rhetoric and reality. Often employees and customers, shareholders and stakeholders like the idea of a messiah leader taking them to great places, so they project on to an ordinary leader Messiah Leadership qualities and expectations. The financial rewards of CEOs astronomically rose over the period from the late-1980s, when transformational leadership became hyped. Everybody wanted a messiah to turn the company around, to lead the public-service sector back to a strong position, to change the company culture and this was reflected in their huge salary hikes. Messiah leaders often have strong egos that can serve them well, or not. If they get seduced by power and the financial rewards, and internalise follower projections of being special, they can become grandiose and feel omnipotent and lose their good judgement. What may look like Messiah Leadership may also be a mirage, a fantasy that all collude in until it comes crashing down.

All organisations need some Messiah Leadership, especially start-ups, social entrepreneurs and those organisations going through great changes in the face of social and technological changes around them.

The four qualities of Messiah Leadership

1. Charisma and influence

   A messiah leader has charisma; others admire, have trust and confidence in the leader,

   enabling them to influence others.

2. Vision

   Creating a strong vision of the future, setting clear purpose and mission enables messiah

   leaders to set the agenda, to inspire and motivate and to raise both morale and material

   resource to achieve goals.

3. Strong culture

   The messiah leader is focused on creating strong and aligned cultures to produce a form

   of culture-control, a group dynamic that binds people together in common cause. When

   working well, it creates a dynamic and collective energy and sense of well-being and,

   when not so well, it creates dependency and conformist cultures.

4. Faith in themselves

   Messiah leaders have strong egos, a strong sense of self and faith in themselves,

   expressed through their vision of the future which becomes an extension of the self.

   When this becomes dysfunctional it can lead to omnipotence, grandiosity, narcissism

   and misjudgements on a grand scale. When working well, this is harnessed to great

   effect to drive positive change and mobilise others.

3.6. Eco-Leadership discourse

'Creating spaces for leadership to flourish'

In today's increasingly globalised and networked society, there is an urgent need for new forms of organisation. We all face a common underlying challenge, that of how to adapt in today's extremely fast-changing and networked world. To address this challenge takes a new form of leadership we call Eco-Leadership (Western, 2008, 2013).

The prefix 'eco' is used because this form of leadership resonates with our understanding of ecosystems. However, Eco-Leadership is not all about ethics and the environment, it is also about realising that 21st century organisations are better understood as interdependent and interconnected ecosystems. This new understanding replaces 20th century ideas of organisations as efficiency machines run with clear hierarchies, structures and boundaries.

Today's 'network society'[2] undoes the leadership theory of the past century. Hierarchies, fixed structures and static roles are not fit-for-purpose in this new work environment. Eco-Leadership focuses on distributing leadership throughout the organisation. Knowing your customers' or clients' changing needs and adapting to them, locally and specifically, requires leadership at the edges as well as the centre. Eco-Leadership is not a luxury, it's a necessity!

From vertical power to lateral power

Today, change takes place between connected peers, much more than the imagined top–down change led from a hierarchy. This change from vertical power to lateral power has taken politicians, economists and company leaders by surprise. Very few are adapting quickly enough to keep up, and many are getting left behind, thinking in the old paradigm and not recognising the new.

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[2] The 'network society' refers to how the internet, computers, social media and globalisation are changing the way we work, live and relate to each other. This is more than a technological advance, it is producing social change that may be a big as the last industrial revolution.

Organisations are 'ecosystems within ecosystems' (Western, 2013)

Successful leaders today are those that recognise this change and who nurture lateral connections, distributing leadership and power as widely as they can. We call them eco-leaders as they recognise that organisations are like 'ecosystems within ecosystems' (Western, 2013). These are not biological ecosystems, like a rainforest, but they act in similar ways. Organisational ecosystems are made up of people, technology and nature; interconnected networks that are interdependent on each other. These organisational ecosystems operate in the wider context of political, technical, social and natural ecosystems that influence all organisations. For far too long many organisations have acted as if they occur in a closed system (the banking system, for example) without accounting for wider influences that impact on them, and also the influences they have on wider society. We are all interconnected and interdependent, whether through climate change or the cost of our limited natural resources.

Eco-leaders look two ways: 1) internally, they view the organisation is an interconnected web of activity, and leadership means influencing and nurturing these connections to produce positive change; and 2) externally, they consider the social, technological, political and environmental changes that are occurring that influence how their organisation functions. Command-and-control leadership doesn't work in today's organisations as leaders can't control an ecosystem or network, they can only influence it.

Take the examples of the financial crash in 2008, the Arab spring revolutions that overthrew dictators and armies that held total power, or the fast rise of Apple, Google and Amazon as world-leading companies. What they all have in common is they happened as result of today's networked, interconnected and interdependent world. Without the internet, the digital economy, social media or mobile technologies, none of these events would have happened.

Another example is running a health system today. It is no longer about running an efficient factory-hospital complex, getting patients diagnosed, treated and discharged. It's about recognising that healthcare is also about wellbeing, and that public health and social care are interdependent – you cannot solve huge and expensive problems like the rise of diabetes or depression without looking at the connections to the other parts of the ecosystem that produce these challenges.

Today's leaders must recognise these networks of connections and our interdependencies, or they are working in the wrong paradigm! Whether solving environmental or migrant challenges, financial service or manufacturing challenges, running healthcare or education systems, or working in a family business, we all have to turn to Eco-Leadership (supported by other discourses) if we are to meet the social, political, environmental and economic challenges and opportunities in today's networked society.

The four qualities of Eco-Leadership

1. Connectivity and interdependence

Eco-Leadership is founded on connectivity, recognising how the network society has transformed social relations, and it also recognises our dependence on each other and the environment. Eco-Leadership focuses on internal organisational ecosystems (technical, social and natural) and the external ecosystems of which organisations are a part.

2. Systemic ethics

Eco-Leadership is concerned with acting ethically in the human realm *and* protecting the natural environment. Systemic ethics goes beyond company values and individual leader morality, which conveniently turn a blind eye to the wider ethical implications of their businesses, such as

ignoring social inequality, the downstream impacts of pollution and supply chain workers, world poverty and environmental sustainability.

3. Leadership spirit

Eco-Leadership acknowledges the importance of the human spirit. It extends its values beyond material gain, paying attention to community and friendship, mythos and logos, the unconscious and non-rational, creativity and imagination. It draws upon the beauty and dynamic vitality within human relationships, and between humanity and the natural world.

4. Organisational belonging

To belong is to be a part of the whole; it is to participate in the joys and challenges faced by communities. Businesses and corporations, like schools, banks and hospitals, belong to the social fabric of community, and cannot operate as separate bodies. Eco-leaders commit organisations to belong to 'places and spaces', developing strong kinship ties (place refers to local habitat and community, and space to the virtual and real networks that organisations also inhabit). Organisational belonging means ending a false separation, realising that company interests and societal interests are interdependent. Organisational belonging is to rethink organisational purpose and meaning.

4. Analysis of research data

4.1. Statistical information: Hidden Leadership project

The Hidden Leadership project started in November 2017 and the research data collection finished in July 2018. The number of respondents and information relating to the various categories, and breakdown of participants are shown below. As previously stated, we have omitted the names of organisations and individuals to retain anonymity and confidentiality.

Stage 1. Overall data

Online surveys taken – 330

Number of organisations involved – 11 initially, 9 completed research process

Male participants – 126

Female participants – 204

Teaching roles – 120

Non-teaching roles – 210

Senior manager roles – 110

Middle manager roles – 165

Other manager roles – 55

Aged below 30 – 14

Aged between 30 and 50 – 188

Aged over 50 – 128

Stage 2. Overall data

Telephone interviews held – 26

Number of organisations involved – 9

Male participants – 13

Female participants – 13

Stage 3. Focus groups

Average attendance of focus group – 9

Overall attendance of focus groups – 80 (Almost 25 per cent of the online survey participants).

Stage 4. Organisational reports

Collated from the research and sent to 9 participating organisations.

Stage 5. National report
Produced from analysing data from research.

4.2. Whole sector results: Quantitative data from online questionnaire

The quantitative research findings in *Figure 5* show all 330 individual responses to our online questionnaire. The results in all categories are based on the self-reporting in the online WILD leadership questionnaires, not on how people in those categories were experienced by others. The results showed that the dominant leadership discourse in the FE sector was the therapist discourse at 45 per cent. This was followed by the Eco-Leadership discourse at 27 per cent, the messiah discourse at 17 per cent and the controller discourse at 11 per cent.

Figure 5. Whole sector discourses
Statistics online surveys: 330 participants
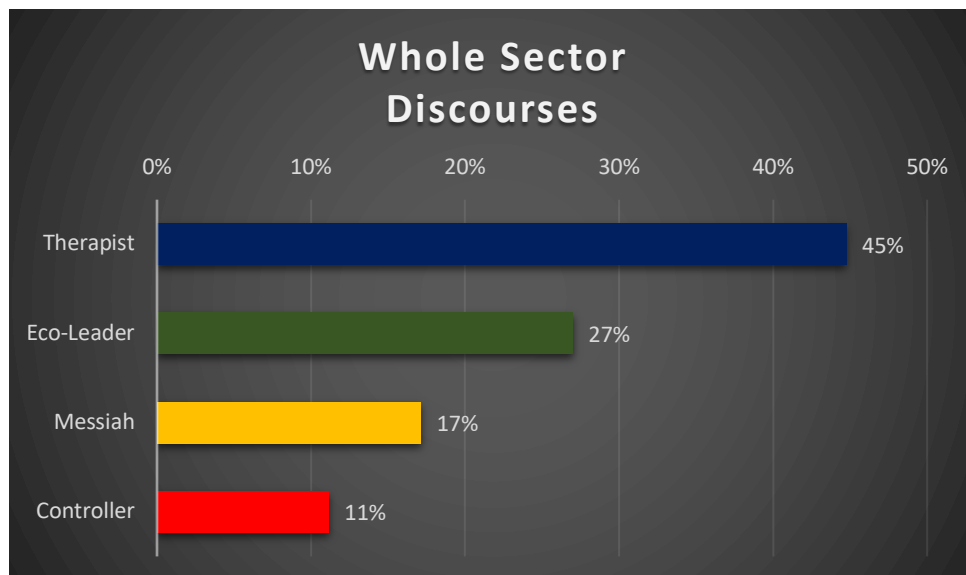
Therapist discourse: first, 45 per cent

All four discourses were present in the sector and the strong Therapist Leadership response reveals a preference for humanistic and supportive leadership approaches. This response is familiar from our work in other sectors that are people-focused, such as in higher education, health and schools. The FE culture clearly sets expectations that leaders will be relational, humane and people-focused, yet it is not a given that the therapist discourse would be the leading discourse, or with such a big lead of 18 per cent over the second discourse, and 28 per cent over the third. Our previous research and work in other people-focused organisations and sectors has produced results with Messiah Leadership, Therapist Leadership and also Eco-Leadership coming first. Therapist Leadership results of a strong 45 per cent shows that the sector is very committed to a leadership approach that puts people first, that is relational and motivates rather than leads through coercive control (Controller Leadership) or cultural control (Messiah Leadership). It frames a leader's role as team leader, personal and hands-on. The challenge for Therapist Leadership cultures is that they can become team- and individual-focused, and not pay enough attention to strategy, wider organisational culture or the changing external environment.

Eco-Leadership: second, 27 per cent

The second most preferred approach was the Eco-Leadership discourse, which showed at 27 per cent. Eco-leaders work with organisations as 'ecosystems within wider ecosystems' (Western, 2013). Internally, they focus on distributing leadership, realising that positive change comes from mobilising and connecting dispersed leaders who are encouraged to use their full potential. Externally, the Eco-Leadership position is active, focusing on social trends, changing sector regulations and observing technological and social disruptions. Leaders are required at the edges, not just at the top, to be able to notice and adapt to change. If teaching and support staff notice changes in student activity and experiences, and have ways to feed this information back to the senior management, the organisation can adapt quickly, taking advantage of new opportunities to offer students what they desire and need, and to prevent failure by seeing challenges early. Senior management, paying

attention to wider political and social changes as well as addressing the all-consuming internal demands, make the organisation healthy and adaptive.

Therapist and Eco-Leadership combined

The results showing that therapist and Eco-Leadership had a combined preference of 72 per cent meant that these two discourses dominate the sector in a very particular way. The Eco-Leadership compliments the therapist discourse well. Eco-Leadership focuses on the organisational ecosystem and takes a more strategic position, and the therapist discourse focuses on empowering and getting the best from staff and engaging in a positive and motivating way with staff, students and all stakeholders.

Messiah and Controller Leadership

Messiah and Controller Leadership both showed low results (17 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively). The low score for Messiah Leadership indicates that the sector recognises that transformational leaders are not the quick-fix answer to the complex challenges faced. On the other hand, perhaps a shift from operational management to enable gifted (messiah) leaders to offer a new vision in the FE sector is also required.

Controller Leadership showed the lowest score, although later in the research some participants felt it was under-represented due to people not wanting to acknowledge its presence in themselves or others. Being a controlling leader is not a good preference for many. This seems to be a positive outcome for the sector as it highlights that coercive and controlling leaders experienced in the past have not delivered success. There is a balance required however, to ensure that Controller Leadership is present enough to ensure efficient financial controls and service and performance targets are met. Differentiating between authoritarian Controller Leadership, and supportive

Controller Leadership that focuses on efficiency and is balanced with Therapist Leadership to deliver high-quality education, was a major discussion point in the later focus groups.
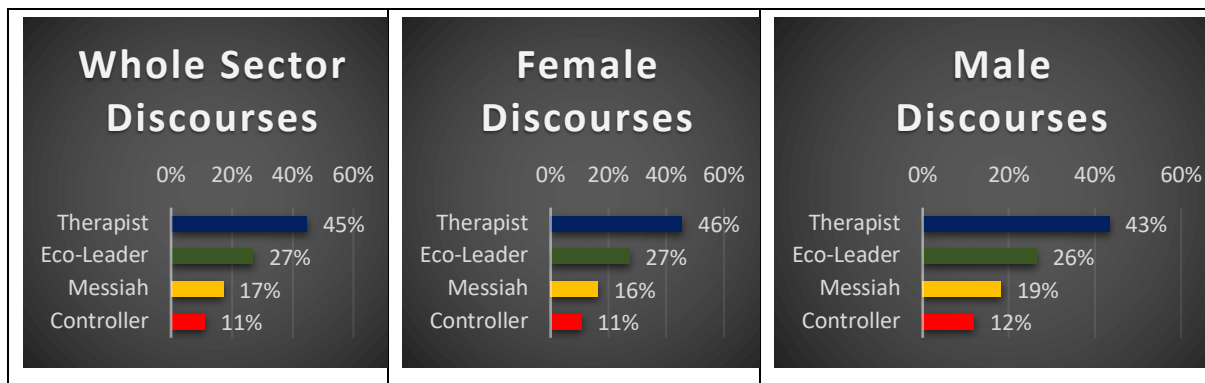
4.3. Gender

Did the views of the respondents differ according to their gender?

When examined across the whole sample, the gender of respondents showed little difference in their perceptions of the leadership discourses. The female and male results showed a preference of discourses in the same order: therapist, eco-leader, messiah and controller.

Figure 6. Gender

Statistics: Female – 204, Male – 126

The female respondents preferred Therapist Leadership only by a gap of 3 per cent over male respondents, and the rest of the results were very closely aligned. The findings suggest that leadership discourses are not gendered along stereotypical lines, for example females are more empathic or nurturing and males more visionary or controlling – messiah. Differences in gender responses may relate to other demographics such as management position (males may be in more senior management roles), age or recruitment and opportunity bias.

Our hypothesis is that the FE sector is a relational sector – teaching and education are, by nature, relational and humanistic in their approaches. Males and females drawn to work in the FE sector

would have a valence that draws them towards Therapist Leadership, and then, once in the sector, they will be shaped by the dominant culture around them (Therapist Leadership). This hypothesis suggests that the culture of the sector over-rides other leadership factors such as gender biases. However, when we break this down into organisational responses, we see that different organisations show differences in how males and females respond to leadership preferences, showing that context matters.

One focus group felt their results, where women had Messiah Leadership slightly higher than men, and men had slightly higher therapist than women, seemed to 'counter traditional expectations of gender leadership roles', which was interesting. The group felt it was positive in the sense that women were taking up more vision and men stepping into the nurturing and relational leadership space. This is particularly welcome and necessary in an educational setting.

Another focus group discussion commented:

> Leadership styles are not gendered but systemic. Preconceived and stereotyped notions of leadership are challenged by this result and it erodes notions such as women being more empathic (therapist discourse) or men being the visionaries leading from the front with charisma (messiah discourse), [our organisation] is inclusive and unbiased in its recruitment, training, and opportunities (at least when considering gender).

Another group commented on the gender dynamics:

> Have those with the strongest visions, risen to the top? Or have patriarchal power structures favoured male members of staff, enabling them to exercise their vision? Or do women take up too much of therapeutic role and that this was in effect disabling the staff rather than helping them.

Business versus Education

Some organisations showed other noticeable differences. One showed females with 20 per cent Controller Leadership (double the overall finding) versus males with only 6 per cent Controller Leadership. This raised a lively discussion in the focus group, with questions being raised as to why females were higher controllers and that it was such a low result in the male group. 'The tension between running a business and being educators – the very strong focus on welfare was sometimes at odds with the business of the college' and the value of a controller may depend on where the respondent is in relation to this pull.

Organisation 6 showed strong gender differences: female with Messiah Leadership at 13 per cent versus male at 30 per cent, and female eco-leader at 23 per cent versus 14 per cent for males.

Figure 7. Organisation 6
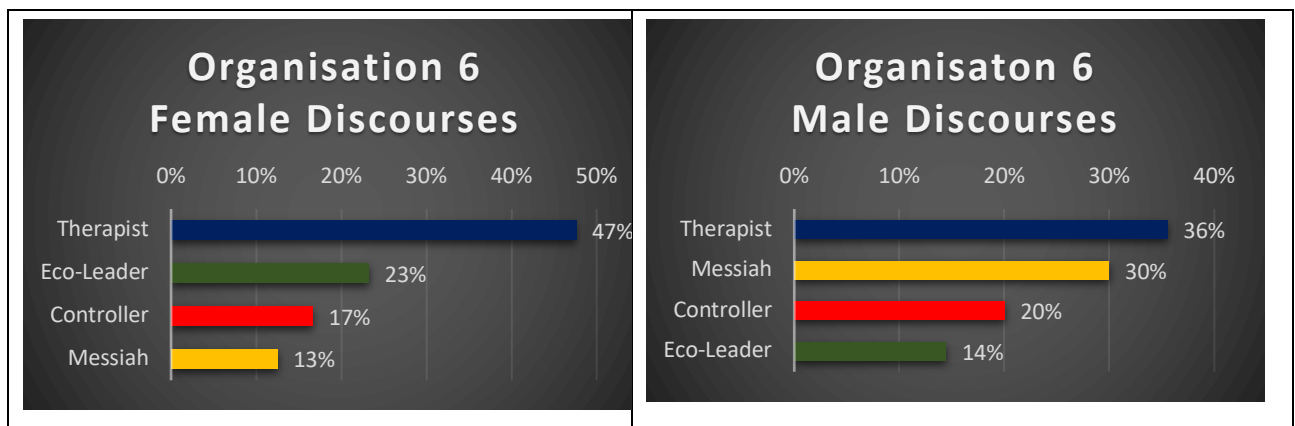
The focus group for Organisation 6 noticed that the therapist discourse was dominant in most of their results apart from the men who are the managing directors.

> At the higher levels the dominance, the therapist discourse gives way to a more messiah discourse. This potentially serves the organisation well in that care and support is available in the body of the organisation, while outward-looking, strategic and visionary elements are employed by the messiah leaders at the top.

Gender leadership approaches can therefore also be closely aligned to position power, for either good reasons or not so good reasons.

The potential pitfalls of this balance is that more caring aspects and ability to read the emotional temperature of the organisation from the highest levels are lost and not taken into account when formulating strategies and deciding on actions. Conversely, opportunities for leadership, vision and inspiration in middle management might be lost in favor of the more caring and compassionate emphasis of the therapist discourse (from *Organisational Report 6*).

The overall gender findings showed little variation, with both genders favouring the therapist discourse. However, each organisation has its own dynamic showing differences that require further internal reflection.

4.4. Age

Did the views of the respondents differ according to their age?

When examined across the whole sample, the respondents age showed both similarities and differences in their perceptions of the leadership discourses.
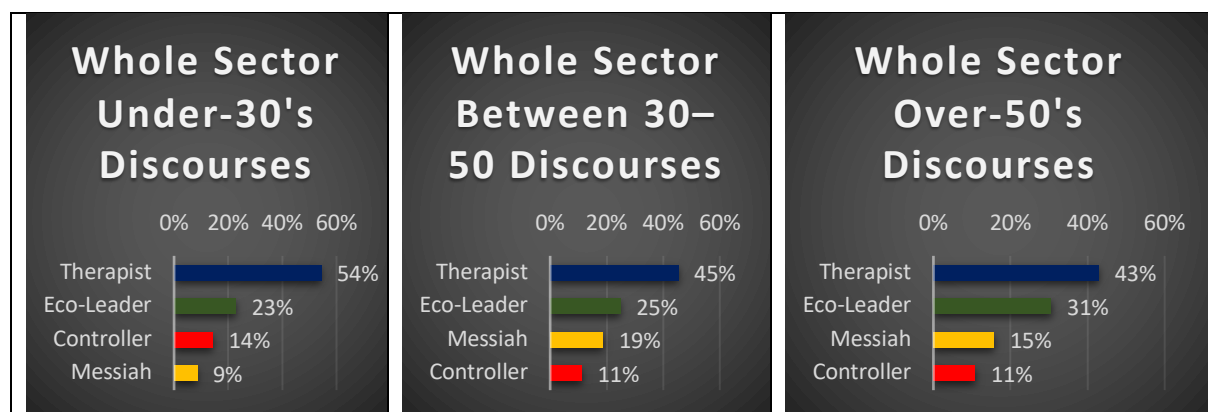
Figure 8. Age

Table 2. Breakdown of respondents by age and gender

Under-30s	30–50	Over-50
Male – 3 Female – 11 Total – 14	Male – 77 Female – 111 Total – 188	Male – 46 Female – 82 Total – 128

Overall, Therapist Leadership was highest in all the age groups. However, there was a large difference in the percentages, showing that the younger the participant, the greater the belief in Therapist Leadership as a dominant discourse – there was a 31 per cent gap between the therapist and Eco-Leadership in the under-30s (although this group cannot be representative as it was a very low number of participants), a 20 per cent gap in the 30–50 age range and this reduced to 12 per cent in the over-50s. This shows that the younger group preferred a more nurturing and relational leadership approach, and whilst they placed Eco-Leadership in second place, the idea of holistic, distributed and connected leadership across the organisation was not so high on their radar. This can be explained perhaps by the oldest group realising that relational, distributed and connected leadership are all very important. The older group would also contain many of the senior leaders, who need to be more strategic, aware of the whole, and aware of external ecosystems impacting on their organisation, so more Eco-Leadership aware.

Messiah Leadership at 9 per cent in the under-30s is interesting, showing a greater rejection of charismatic and transformational leadership than the older groups.

Organisational insights – age

Some organisations found that younger groups favoured Eco-Leadership and assumed that 'digital natives were naturally more networked'. Whereas other organisations found Eco-Leadership more prevalent in older groups (reflecting the overall findings), believing this was related to the more strategic and big-picture thinking required at more senior levels.

In one organisation, which had no respondents under 30, the 30–50 age group had Eco-Leadership slightly higher than Therapist Leadership (29 per cent and 28 per cent respectively) compared to the over-50s (Therapist Leadership, 33 per cent and Eco-Leadership, 29 per cent). The focus group felt that this 'could be expected as Eco-Leadership is related to the networked and digital age which younger generations are more comfortable and familiar with in general' (from *Organisational Report 1*). This difference was reversed in another setting, Organisation 9, with, again, no respondents under 30, where the 30–50 age group had Eco-Leadership slightly lower than Therapist Leadership (28 per cent and 32 per cent respectively) compared to the over-50s (Therapist Leadership, 31 per cent and Eco-Leadership, 40 per cent). Organisation 7 did have respondents under 30 and showed 38 per cent Eco-Leadership compared to 22 per cent for the 30–50 age range and 29 per cent for the over-50s, and Therapist Leadership showing 33 per cent, 22 per cent and 29 per cent respectively, across the age groups. This can be contrasted with Organisation 5, where the strongest finding was for Therapist Leadership (58 per cent in the under-30s age group, compared to 45 per cent in 30–50s and 42 per cent in the over-50s, while in this college Eco-Leadership was 18 per cent, 14 per cent and 27 per cent with the higher percentage in the over-50s group.

> The younger members of the organisation lean more heavily towards the Therapist Leadership Discourse, and its emphasis on emotional aspects of work. This might further evidence the hypothesis that individuals lower down in the organisation feel vulnerable and in need of attention during a period of transition, while those higher up may feel more secure and grounded, and, as a result, more able to take up aspects of the other discourses' (from *Organisational Report 5*).

Four settings had no respondents under the age of 30 and comments highlighted 'a clear need was present for "new blood" and that the organisation would benefit from a new layer of up-and-coming personnel'.

The findings suggest that leadership discourses are not clearly related to the age of the respondents. They also reveal that leadership has to be locally and specifically accounted for. In some organisations, the younger groups seemed to need a more relational and nurturing approach than others, and this is important data for the organisation, particularly in relation to supporting future leaders.

The focus groups also revealed how much work has to be done around digging much deeper to understand the diverse approaches to leadership and how they can integrate and align with each other to provide the right balance at any given time. Eco-Leadership, being a new discourse, clearly requires more understanding; do young people identify with this more or less? Should senior leaders be more proficient in Eco-Leadership approaches? Is there a correlation between seniority and age in relation to Eco-Leadership?

4.5. Teaching and non-teaching roles
Did the views of the respondents differ by teaching and non-teaching roles of respondents?

The findings were explored comparing teaching and non-teaching staff. Across the whole sector the results were aligned across both roles with Therapist Leadership Discourse highest, followed by Eco-Leadership, then Messiah Leadership and Controller Leadership.

Figure 9. Teaching and non-teaching roles
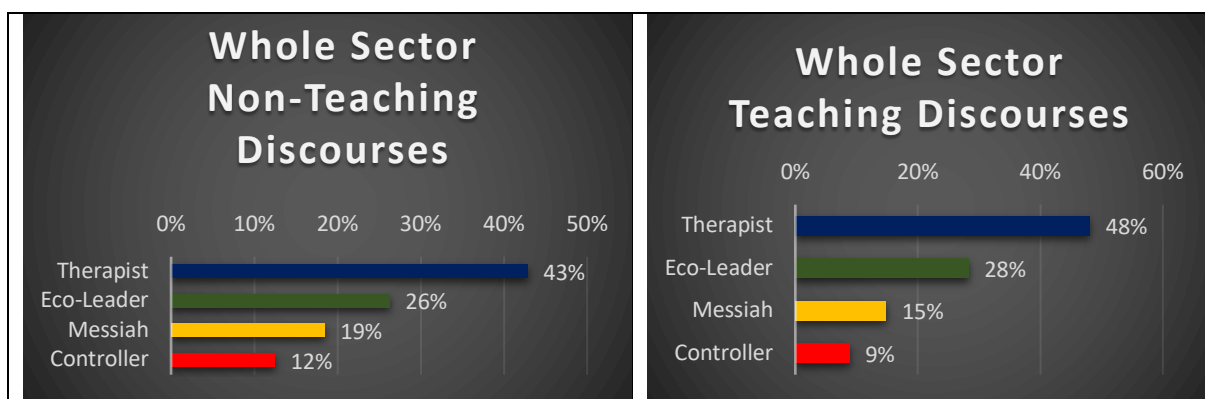
Those in a teaching role led with a high Therapist Leadership score, which was seen as appropriate and a positive finding as frontline teaching roles rely on relationships both with students and with colleagues to deliver success.

Organisational insights – job role

Eco-Leadership showed marked differences in different organisations but not with a consistent pattern. Four organisations showed Eco-Leadership in second place (one tied) though relatively equally strong in the teaching and non-teaching role. In Organisation 6, a big variation occurred with teaching staff showing Eco-Leadership as 37 per cent compared to non-teaching staff of 13 per cent; in Organisation 8 this was reversed, with teaching staff showing 11 per cent Eco-Leadership compared to non-teaching staff of 29 per cent.

Controller Leadership was also variable without a clear pattern, except it was always low, its highest score 15 per cent and lowest 0.

Messiah Leadership tended to show similarity across teaching and non-teaching staff in each organisation. The focus group in Organisation 8 (H), where Messiah Leadership was second, made the comment:

Both a high therapist and Messiah Leadership score, which was appropriate and a positive finding as frontline teaching roles rely on relationships both with students and colleagues to deliver success. They also need to inspire confidence and build rapport with vision and charisma and are appropriately less concerned with the aspects of control and distribution seen in the other discourses.

These findings again show that in different organisations, different leadership approaches are preferred in response to specific and local conditions; they cannot be generalised. While the overall trends show an alignment between teaching and non-teaching staff, in particular cases very different perspectives were found.

4.6. Seniority of leaders
Did the views of the respondents differ by managerial level of respondents?

The findings were explored among senior leaders, middle leaders/management and other leadership (all those outside of the middle and senior leadership categories). Therapist Leadership was the highest overall and Controller Leadership the lowest. The interesting finding in this category was that the Controller Leadership results grew as the level of leadership dropped, so senior leaders showed 6 per cent, middle leaders, 13 per cent and other leaders, 17 per cent. The other leaders group also had the highest Therapist Leadership with 47 per cent, with Messiah Leadership in second place, whereas the middle and senior managers placed Eco-Leadership in second place. From this, we hypothesise that the lower ranking the staff in the organisation, the greater the desire or need for relational and supportive leadership, and they are much less engaged with Eco-Leadership. This demonstrates a big gap between the aspirational desire for Eco-Leadership, and the reality whereby those lower in the organisational ranks have the lowest experience of distributed leadership in practice.
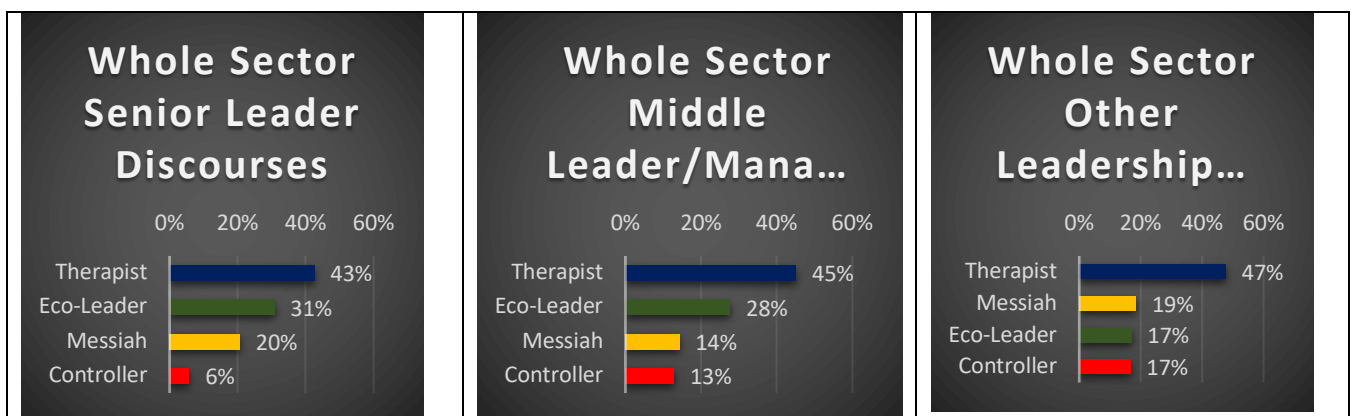
Figure 10. Leadership seniority

Table 3. Breakdown of respondents by leadership level and gender

Senior leaders	Middle leaders	Other leaders
Male – 57 Female – 53 Total – 110	Male – 55 Female – 110 Total – 165	Male – 14 Female – 41 Total – 55

Organisational insights – seniority of leaders

In the individual organisations, there was greater variety between managerial/leadership levels.

Organisation 6 showed Messiah Leadership at 26 per cent among senior managers, 13 per cent among middle managers and 50 per cent (highest) among other leadership roles. In Organisation 9, Messiah Leadership was 30 per cent, 16 per cent and 25 per cent among the respective groups and another organisation showed 12 per cent, 8 per cent, and 0. This variety was also shown in other settings and may indicate that managers at different levels are pulling in different directions in relation to what they expect from leaders.

Eco-Leadership was varied overall and within organisations, with no clear pattern emerging. It showed as 0 in the other leadership group in Organisation 6, with senior managers showing 20 per cent and middle managers 21 per cent; and in Organisation 2, 40 per cent from middle managers with 29 per cent from senior managers and 12 per cent among other leadership roles. What became clear within the focus groups was that many felt a gap and a fragmentation between senior managers and other levels. This will be further explored in *Section 4.7*.

> There are differences of perception about leadership between the senior management team and the operational staff.

4.7. Focus groups and telephone interviews: *Six key themes from qualitative data*

A range of key themes emerged from the focus group dialogues that illustrate the current preoccupations within the sector and are characterised by balancing and competing tensions. We used the data from the telephone interviews to inform some of the work undertaken in the focus

groups. In each focus group, participants were invited to reflect on leadership from different perspectives, for example, reviewing and discussing the findings of the online results, drawing images without words of the organisation (see *Appendix 2* for focus group structure). The six themes below highlight the key issues that arose from these discussions and activities.

Six key themes

1. *Communication*

2. *Desire for clarity*

3. *Fragmentation and connectivity*

4. *Internal desire versus external pressure*

5. *Vibrant workforce – learners at the centre*

6. *Future leadership*

1. Communication

We begin with some participant quotes from the focus groups.

> There are lots of layers – information flows down to the middle and from middle but information only going up, not much comes down.

> Context not provided – you get included in conversations about ideas, strategy etc. and excluded from the next stage, which is ok but not told why.

> They don't communicate enough really – good strategic thinkers but don't tell us enough about what is going on.

With growth happening quickly, structures often had not changed at the same pace and this meant there needed to be more two-way flow of information, so more staff could be involved in setting and implementing the vision.

They do control things because of the money and I can understand that but it would be better if there was more communication and if it felt more inclusive.

Lots of information is circulated with reliance on email and it would be nice if [it was] more two-way and relevant and planned – it feels random.

How to communicate, what to communicate, who should be talking to who and about what, and what blocked communications were common threads in the focus groups. These themes feed into the headline finding referred to earlier about connecting internal ecosystems. Conversations in the focus groups often began with 'they' (senior leaders) need to communicate better, but soon shifted to realise that one-way communications from top–down were only part of the issue. How to improve communication and create platforms for exchanges not only to take place from top-down, but also bottom-up, and less vertical and more lateral communication that takes place across the organisational networks. There was a strong desire for 'more listening and staff's opinions and views being considered' along with some examples where good information systems meant senior leaders were said to have a comprehensive overview and it enabled creativity and innovation.

Drawing 1: Example from a focus group
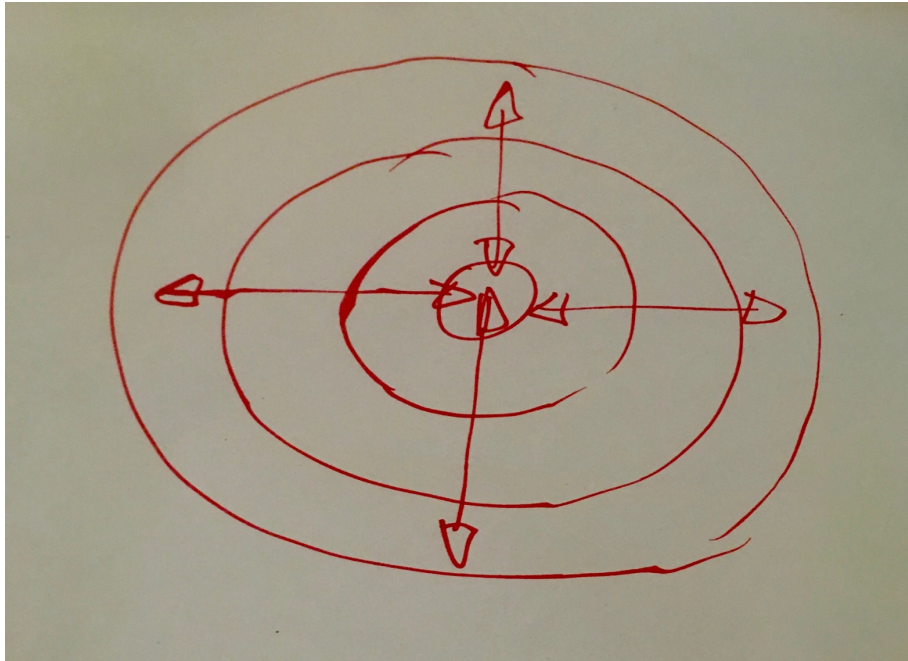
Drawing 1 epitomises the strong focus on how a hierarchy creates a central point, with everything cascading downwards, outwards, throughout and it all going back to one central point/person, resulting in a logjam.

Other drawings featured images of blocks, impasses, difficult terrain and danger. The associations suggested that leadership and authority were being prevented from flourishing and that skills and experience were not being given space or opportunity to be made use of. The blocks indicated problems with senior leaders communicating clear ideas about their vision to middle managers. The perception created was that senior leadership was faulty and lacked a clear direction or methodology for growth, containment or an appropriate organisational structure.

This perceived disconnectedness of the senior figures aroused suspicions about competence and accountability, leaving middle managers feeling disempowered, de-skilled, and de-authorised. The conditions for disharmony and low morale seemed exacerbated by the lack of emotional data (Therapist Leadership Discourse) and networked and distributed authority (Eco-Leadership discourse).

Leadership can feel top-heavy and old-fashioned, where communication is taking place only between two people.

2. Desire for clarity

Teamwork needs developing at the top and across organisations. Middle management needs to be more involved with the strategic decisions, with the understanding from top-level that they need feedback from middle managers in the implementation of decisions. Developing leaders/non-leaders/followers, i.e. recognising that leadership is everywhere, not just at the top, and that active followership is just as important as leadership (the two are entwined).

A desire for clarity of purpose and vision in a fuzzy, complex environment emerged in a number of discussions linking to the headline finding in relation to both the need for a radical redistribution of leadership and connecting internal ecosystems.

Images depicted bewildering or jumbled scenes, seeming to indicate a lack of structured, consistent vision. *Drawing 2* of a mountain with variable cloud coverage in upper and lower levels in the organisation – sometimes clear and sometimes not – linked to a desire for clarity about co-ordination.

Drawing 2: Example from a focus group
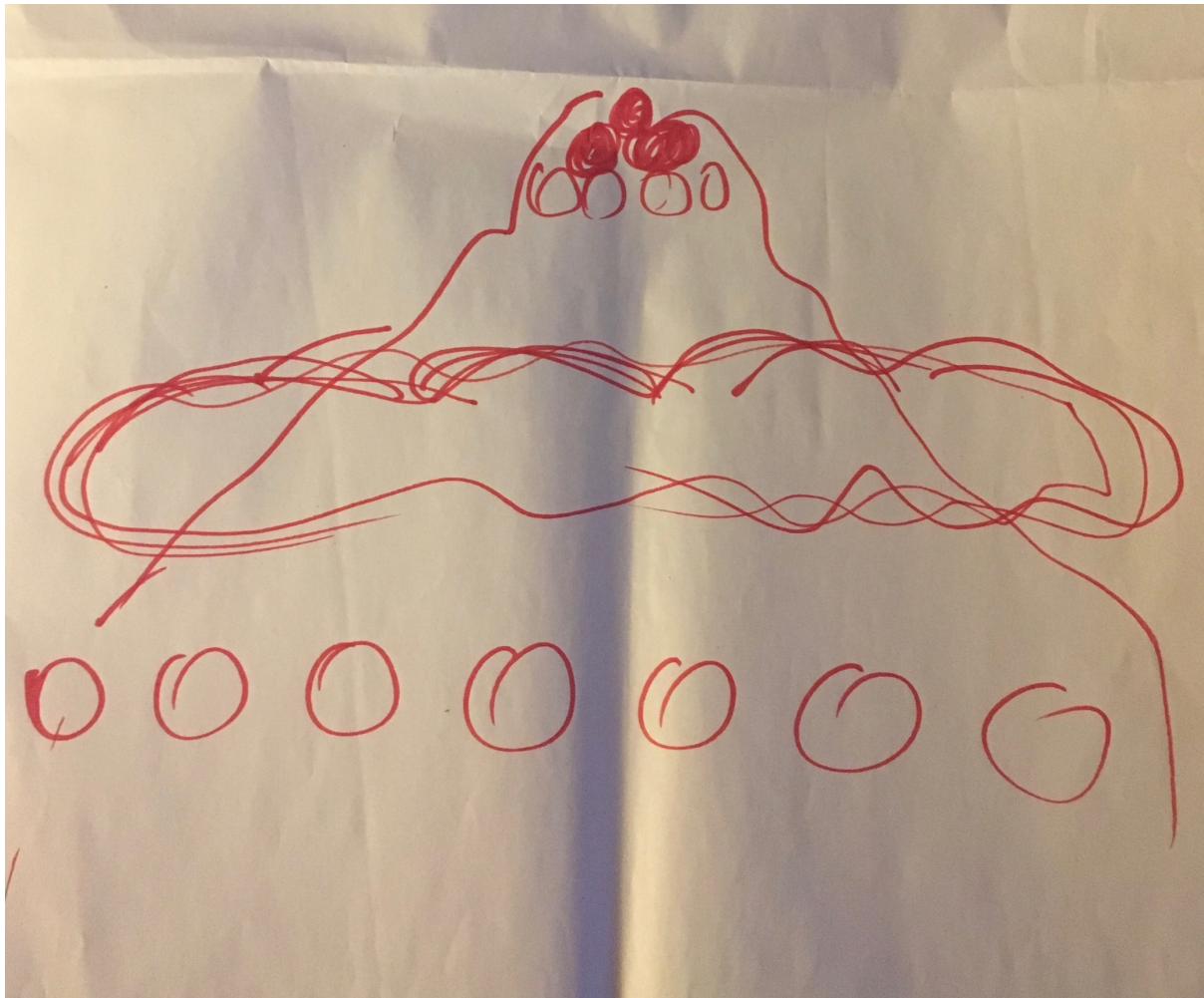
A drawing of an organogram led one group to the association that it looked like TV monitors with only three legs at bottom holding whole thing up, and that it will wobble with only three legs. Leadership in this organisation was sometimes experienced as inconsistent, opaque, chaotic and vague, and also as layered, top-down, and bottom-up with some democracy.

The need for more role clarity and clear lines of accountability, without undermining the friendly, open and visible leadership culture, was identified in a number of groups and could indicate the need to draw more on the healthy aspects of controller leaders who 'strive for clear accountability, systems, processes, roles, accountabilities and responsibilities'. Developing role clarity and clear

delegation across the organisation so people are doing role-appropriate tasks was a suggestion so senior leaders 'don't try and do everything'.

3. Fragmentation and connectivity

We like the idea of leaders all across the college at different levels. We have managers, but individuals are all pushing different agendas. Leadership is happening but it's not connecting up, so it falls into a black hole. Good networks are happening but are not connecting over the whole system.

The boss is at the top. There are good ideas and people do try to glue things together and solve problems, but we are not a cohesive whole. We try but we are not connecting.

We can be individuals and work together.

Whilst we have corporate and curriculum, one will not work without the other and nothing will happen without vision.

It is energetic, creative chaos, brains trust, has impact, is innovative and creative. An organisation that engages, empowers and is committed to growth.

Two interconnected themes featured in the discussions: experiences of fragmented, disconnected leadership resulting in a desire for connectivity and holism contrasting with experience of connected, interdependent, diverse, inclusive organisations. This linked to the report headline findings, connecting internal ecosystems and redistribution of leadership.

Drawing 3: Example from a focus group

Disconnection, lack of linked-up thinking, frustration, confusion and fear emerged in a number of groups and is depicted clearly in *Drawing 3*.

Drawing 4: Example from a focus group
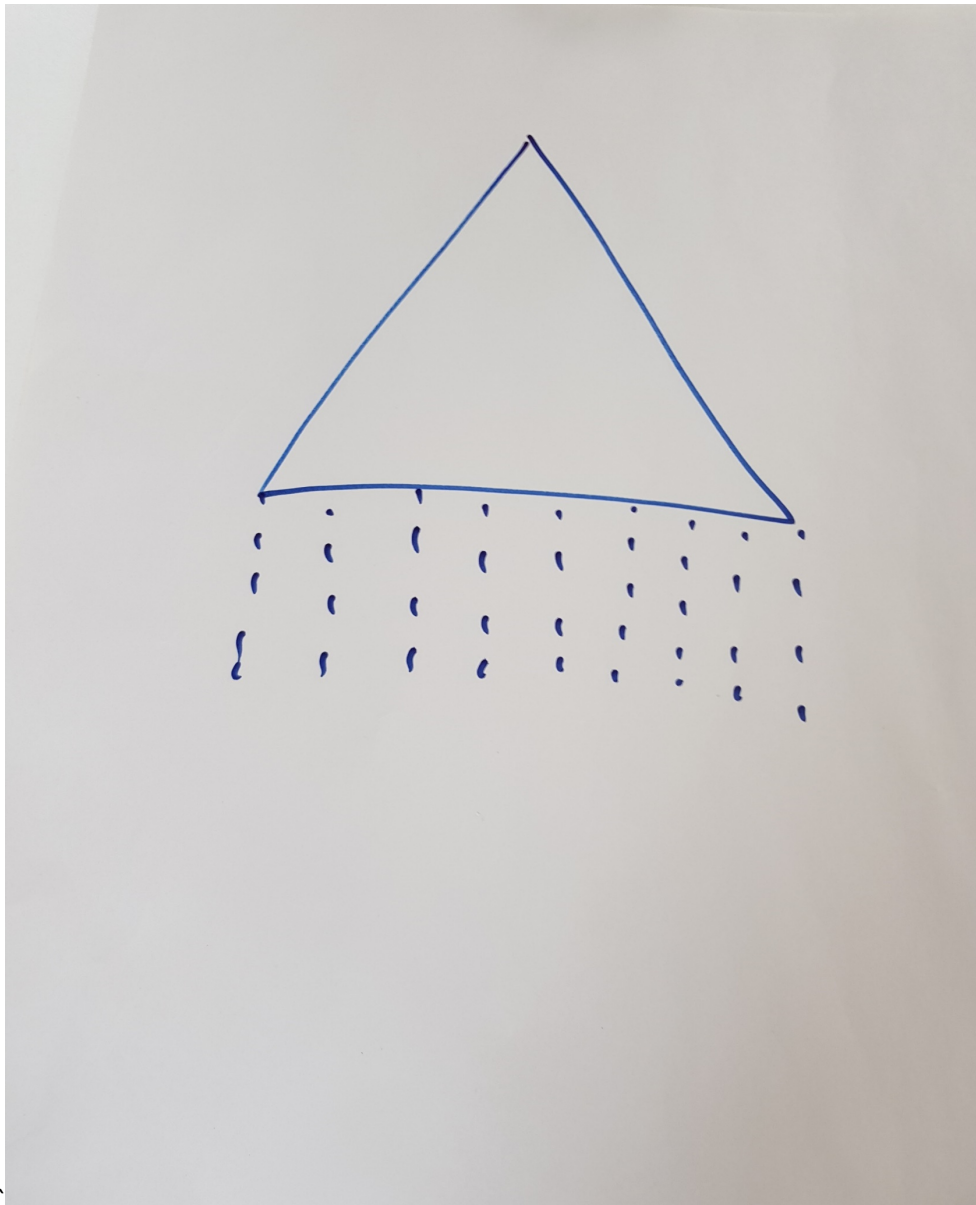
There are many triangular, tent-like structures in the drawings (as in *Drawing 4*), with associations

drawn to them representing traditional, top–down leadership structures. Images depicted

traditional hierarchical structures, featuring top–down leadership, with little evidence of Eco-

Leadership discourses. Lack of connection between disparate elements also featured, suggesting

that these dominant structures were, at least in part, insufficient. Circus images of various forms

featured strongly, suggesting the difficulty of managing a multitude of complex tasks in a chaotic

environment. Recognition of the potential for more complex and contemporary leadership

structures was evident.

Drawing 5: Example from a focus group

There were images of hierarchical triangles with gaps between the higher and lower levels (see

Drawing 5).

These difficult experiences of fragmentation were also mixed with more complex experiences of

emerging connectedness and distributed leadership. In a few settings, there were images of pockets

of leadership all over the place, not overly coordinated or joined-up, with pockets of team-working

and leading. Interconnectedness was evident in one group as they described 'leadership and talent

popping up all over the place', but sometimes alone, independent, siloed, solitary, invited/not

invited. Good leadership did take place in formal and informal pockets of leadership and

followership, but it wasn't always consistent and not connected to the whole.

In other settings, a more positive experience was described.

Drawing 6: Example from a focus group
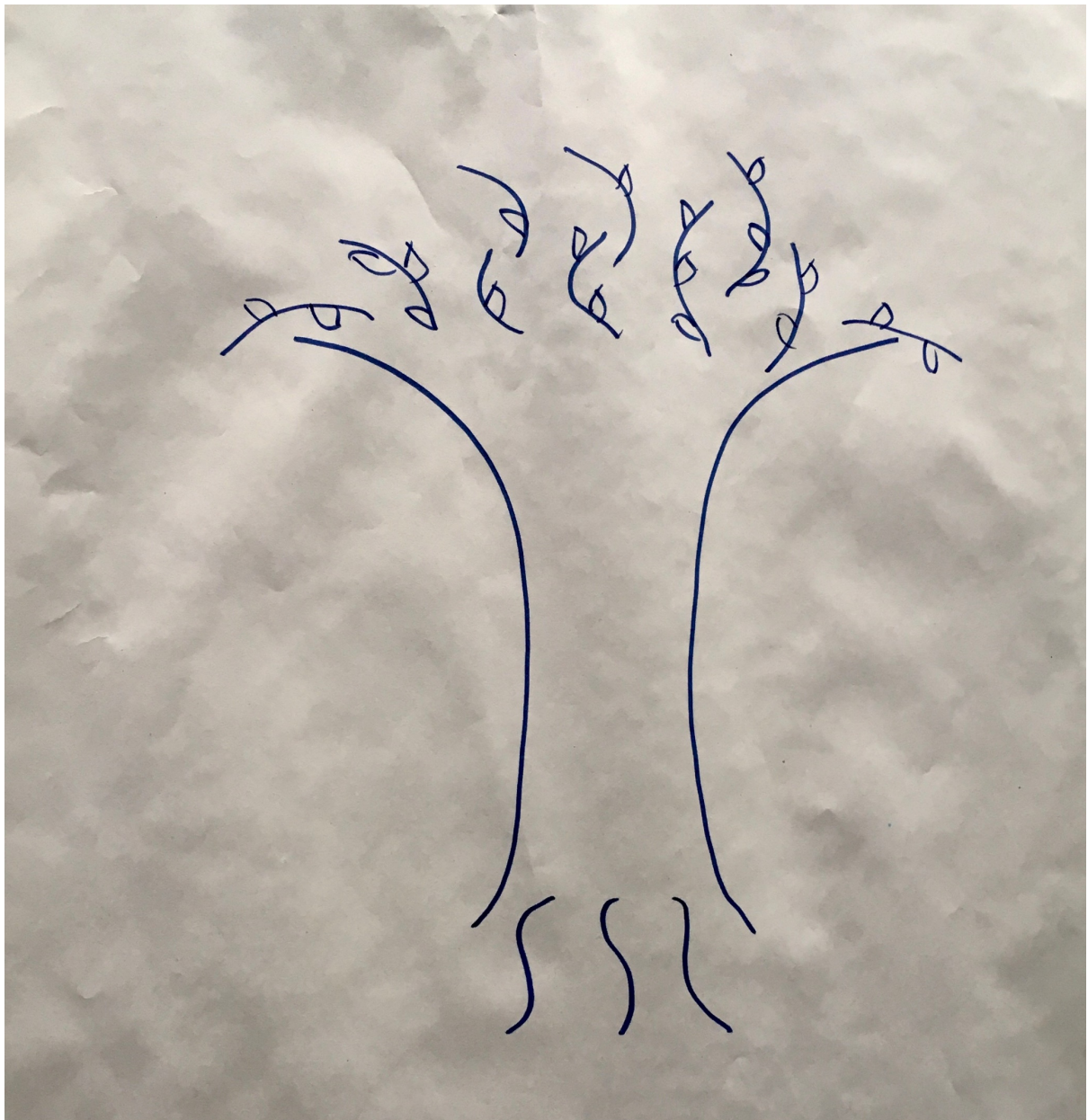
The tree demonstrates our objectives and vision and the branches and leaves represent staff functions – one doesn't work without the other, shows that structure and hierarchy are necessary, as is two-way flow.

The group described how the roots on the tree demonstrate our roots and connections. 'We interlink and overlap', as shown in other images of a beehive and a Venn diagram. 'This diagram which looked at how we get coverage in all four types of leadership and we have all the elements and create partnerships in different ways.'

The group described a feeling of growing and flourishing and of movement and positive leadership. Describing how information flowed in to management, through middle management to the workers and 'because we have that we can work together and go away and work individually as well'.

Drawing 7: Example from a focus group
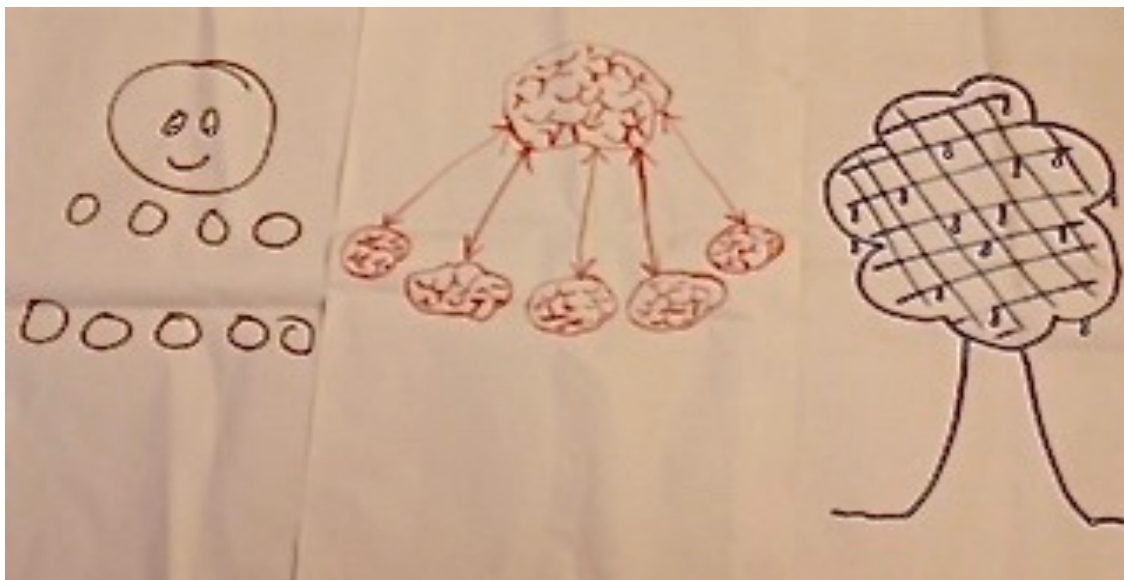
Innovation, creativity, connectedness and benevolence emerged in another setting (*Drawing 7*) where brains represented the different aspects of leadership by emphasising the flow back and

forwards – ideas, innovation and creativity. A smiley face represented general benevolence in leadership. Everything was described as interlinked, and 'we see the true path to the shining future'. The organisation and its leadership is experienced as stable, connected, collaborative two-way, with shared purpose, collective values and interconnected and networked teams and individuals.

Leadership is everywhere?

A picture of a box with a window evoked thoughts of a room full of leaders, sometimes allowed in and sometimes allowed out. A hexagon illustrated leadership is multi-faceted – there's a way in and out for all.

Another group reflected on their diversity and inclusivity. 'We are a bunch of all-sorts who are part of a community, where different levels all work together for the good of the students and the college.'

Collaborative, accommodating, democratic and values-led community – there was an image of a circle indicating the unity of the organisation. An honest, friendly, caring, supportive environment that feels like a home where you have family – one of the drawings was of a house.

4. **Internal desires and external pressures**

Network events are full of self-doubt about leadership, both about finance and results, but perhaps we have more power than we think.

With the changing external environment, we need a different sort of leadership in FE, to shift thinking away from what gets in the way, the difficult external political realities and focus on the

learners. We need to develop leadership that positively asks where next – how do we make that happen in the context of the changing external environment.

There's a global debate on what is measured and is it the right thing to be measured in education. E.g. what's measured is what's easy – pass rates and attendance. But is it engagement? – 'I'm here physically but not intellectually'. 'Students are not turning up so it must be down the teacher.

Targets can dominate over staff morale and wellbeing, e.g. some people are not confident in driving in the snow but it's the end of the month and targets must be met, so no sympathy for the staff.

The way you have to run a college financially is about efficiency – and they don't have the luxury of looking at their skills and development. They just work in the way they used to work – very rigid and structured.

I don't think there's much scope for creativity.

Conflict in policy – get young people into college and you get money and then you try to keep them to keep the money, but it might not be the best place for them.

Monetary value – rate of return makes or breaks reputation or financial wellbeing – do they understand return on investment – disconnected from the reality of what's happened elsewhere.

The focus is on meeting external requirements – government controls and money – stifles creativity.

Stakeholder demands very big and funding forces us to be controllers [leadership].

Stifles creativity – you have to stay within the tram tracks of what you are required to deliver, e.g. we have to get all students through GCSE in maths – if you had more freedom to use another means of assessment and maths-based qualification, we could get students through but they are forced to do GCSE because that's what structure demands. The alternative method wouldn't be inferior, just different, and they would achieve but instead we have to push them through something that is suited to one style of intelligence. So they experience failing. They couldn't access this different approach at school but we could offer that if we weren't constrained by the rigid framework.

Many discussions included preoccupations with external controls and pressures and the tension with internal desires to get on with the educational task and purpose raising questions linked to the finding, Eco-Leadership in the external ecosystems. How can organisations thrive in a changing external environment that may clash on the surface level with the personal and professional values of staff? Can the external changes be embraced and leadership use them as an opportunity? What is possible?

Groups spoke about the need for things to be different, to be more dynamic and to respond to the changing internal and external environment, to the changing needs of both employers and students but they were less confident in the sector's senior leaders' ability to do that.

We sit in shifting sand and environment; Labour government was different, and we need to adapt to market forces as we are blowing in the wind. Hard not feel isolated and suffering from lack of funding. This isn't just us, it's the sector.

Drawing 8: Example from a focus group
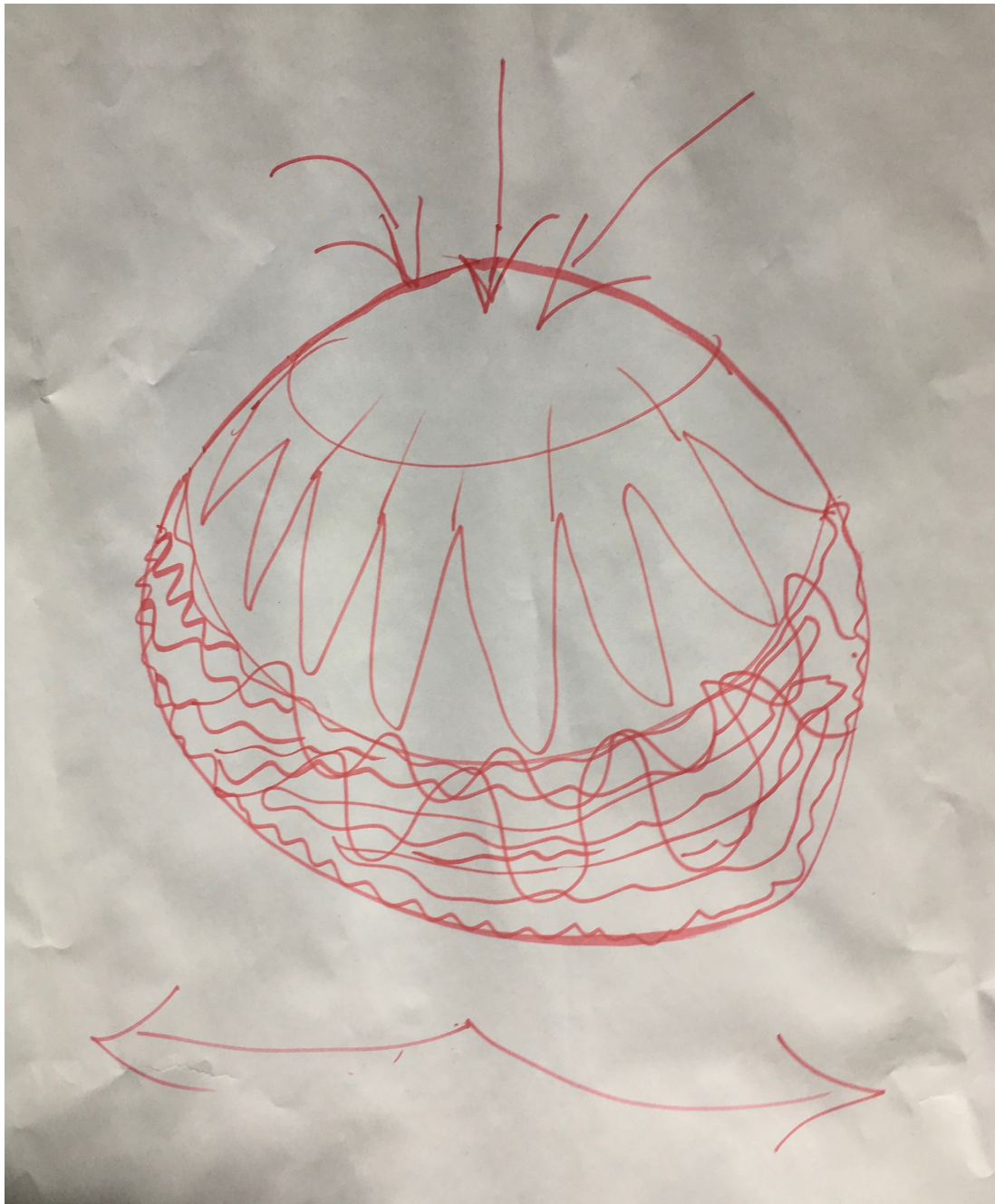
A lot of the images focused on outside pressures and turbulence. Lots of work and turbulence in the workers – there was an image of a globe on a rocker, showing it is not always easy, can fall out of balance and feel like it's going to topple over because there's resistance to change.

Another image was of a tree with two different sides. A healthy tree which is positive – the other side is broken or dying. This epitomised the fear of change and uncertainty that seemed to counter the 'strong new saplings' that emerge.

5. **Vibrant workforce – learners at the centre**

We have a strong vision. Our people are completers. We deliver on what we set out to do.

We are trying to hit moving targets. Vision for the learners never falters.

We put learners first, always.

We get the job done!

Managers and leaders are accessible!

We are on an upward journey and feel optimistic.

Other organisations order you to jump – here, when they want you to jump, they jump with you.

Resilience – this is a real strength that has carried us through many challenges.

Strong therapist [leadership] element shows in the level of care for staff that creates goodwill.

No matter what grade you are, your opinion is valid.

Everyone is equal and brings something to the organisation.

Good sector knowledge and our networking abilities very good – they know everyone.

There is strong advocacy for the young people who are the most disadvantaged, who don't succeed in mainstream education. We find a way for them to access education – very positive. We are working with the most marginalised, who've been in prisons, who are autistic and all of that is outside of the expected framework…Very much outside.

The sector is alive with a wealth of values-driven, committed and energetic people working towards shared goals to provide outstanding educational opportunities. This pool of talent and commitment is an asset and strength from which a redistribution of leadership can take place to unleash the potential of the sector and the students. This is clearly supported by the strength of the relational and humanistic leadership of the Therapist Leadership approach in all settings.

Images of paths to shining futures and to sunshine led to conversations about trust and confidence in themselves, the learners and the vision and approach of the senior leadership.

Drawing 9: Example from a focus group

In a number of settings, there is a robust and healthy relationship between the senior leadership and their staff – their vision and goal is supported and delivered by strong enthusiastic followers. Senior staff are accessible and know everyone and this creates loyalty and a feeling of belonging with no fear of leaders allowing for autonomy and creativity in delivery.

There is evidence of adaptable systems where staff feel authorised to deliver in their own way and take ownership of shared organisational goals which allow for excellent staff morale. People spoke of a willingness to change and to embrace the challenges of the changing external environment.

There was resilience in face of change, adaptability and an ability to make hard decisions.

High levels of student involvement, being student-focused and valuing the student contribution was seen as a leadership strength. Vulnerable young people are supported to thrive through the culture and structure created by the whole organisation.

The ethos of collaboration and working across departments was acknowledged to have shifted one organisation to a more creative place. 'Here people are trusted to do the job and thrive on lack of micro-management' and there is shared ownership and motivation in teams which are working collaboratively.

In another setting, the group commented on how the senior managers and leaders don't differ from everyone else and there is alignment with rest of organisation. This consistency, supported by strong policies and procedures, meant there was a strong sense of fair play and equal treatment and interest in and knowledge of staff, learners and the external environment.

6. **Future proofing – growing our own**

Where will the future leaders come from?

Key talents are hard to transfer on.

We need to address bottle necks in the system.

With the changing external environment, groups felt there is a need for a different sort of leadership in FE. There was a need to shift thinking away from what gets in the way, such as difficult external political realities, and focus on the learners to develop a leadership that asks where next – how do we make that happen in the context of the changing external environment? Developing leaders across organisations more holistically rather than in silos was a suggestion. For example, developing senior managers alongside other staff and thinking about how to help leaders across organisations have frank and honest conversations about professionalism. Developing leaders/non-leaders/followers, i.e. recognising that leadership is everywhere, not just at the top, and that active followership is just as important as leadership (the two are entwined). How can we link that to confidence in role?

There were a number of proposals to look again at internal management training, to help people progress and to make that part of the succession planning. One college had a senior leadership training programme and the focus group felt that the next layer of leadership should be offered more leadership training to support the transition from teacher to leader. There was recognition that stepping into a leadership role is a hugely complex challenge, with managing budgets, leading and managing people and that organisations would benefit from offering development support.

Drawing 10: Example from a focus group
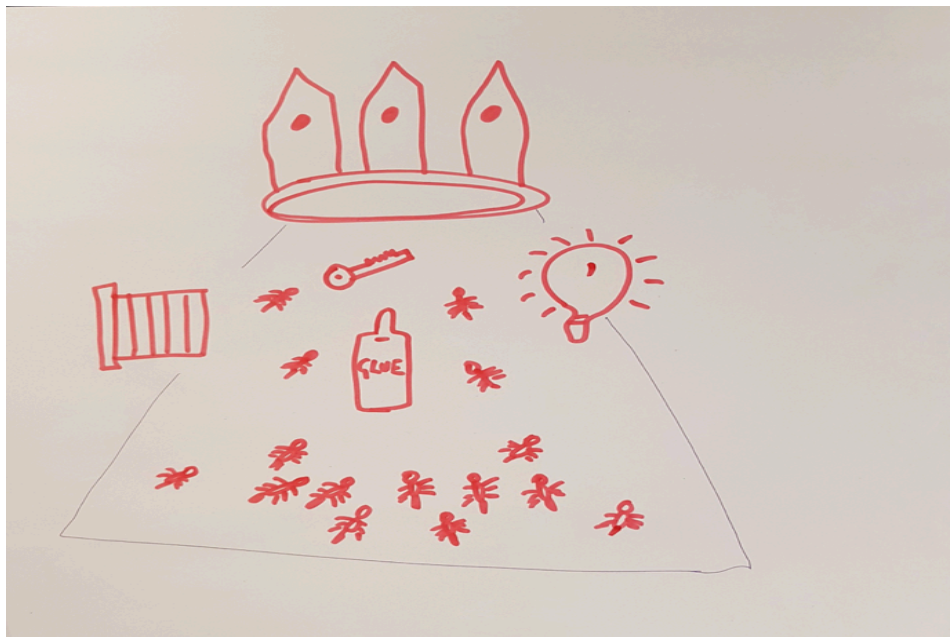
Groups discussed developing leaders/non-leaders/followers, i.e. recognising that leadership is everywhere, not just at the top, and that active followership is just as important as leadership (the two are entwined). The two key questions that arose were a) how to maximise potential across the organisation, and b) how to develop a more networked leadership development approach, that can deliver the Eco-Leadership desired. Developing leaders across the organisation more holistically rather than in silos was a suggestion. For example, developing senior managers alongside other staff – not just senior management attending retreats on their own. The leadership consults at a senior level with people outside the organisation rather than drawing on the expertise within the organisation and the phenomenal knowledge base and experience. There is a place for looking externally, but the first port of call could be internal and this could be developed as the organisation moves toward a more Eco-Leadership approach.

The phrase 'succession planning' featured in a number of groups and linked to the need to shift the approach as outlined in the headline findings. This needed to begin with 'the empowerment of others to free up energy to contribute more to the organisation'.

The six key themes identify a sector that has many strengths and faces many challenges. One of the important strengths that our research reveals is the clear insights into its current challenges and the ability to discuss challenges and tensions openly. The six themes named here feed into our final recommendations.

4.8 Leadership symptoms
'In search of leadership symptoms'

In *Global leadership perceptions: Insights and analysis* (Western and Garcia, 2018) the authors developed a new research methodology to discover how each country/region has its own special leadership and followership essences or what they called their 'leadership symptom'.

> A leadership symptom is the hidden essence that leadership and followership repetitively circle around, unable to escape its gravitational pull. This hidden essence is culturally, historically and socially inscribed, it escapes easy definition and refuses to fit into normative leadership models. The leadership symptom is not leadership itself. It is the essence that informs how leadership is practised. Leadership is a dynamic process, and those engaged in this process circle around the symptoms of leadership in very particular ways, in each unique context (Western, 2019)-

Too often, leadership theories and competencies are taken from one culture and inserted onto another, as if they are universal or directly transferable. The research in *Global leadership perceptions: Insights and analysis* shows, instead, that in spite of the 'globalisation of leadership', each country retained and developed hidden and unrecognised forms of leadership and followership that were culturally specific. The book concluded that only by paying attention to these local 'leadership symptoms' could specific leadership development processes be designed that would recognise local conditions and needs, and therefore provide sustainable change. This research project drew on this

newly published research and was based on our hypothesis that a similar process would unfold in the FE sector. The FE sector as a whole, and each organisation in particular, has its own specific history and culture. While these are influenced by wider UK and global forces, the sector and each organisation also retain their unique leadership essence or symptom. One of our aims was to discover what leadership symptoms and essences are specific to the colleges and organisations involved in the project and the FE sector as a whole. This section reviews our initial findings in this domain.

The focus groups were asked to identify what is special, particular, unusual or unique that shapes the leadership and followership culture. They were asked firstly about the leadership symptom in the college/organisation, and then in the FE sector as a whole. This work is to try and identify that which is beyond the obvious, and what are the unspoken essences that inform how leadership is practised. The findings are self-explanatory and set out below.

Individual organisation leadership symptoms

The key factors identified as the essence or symptom of what informs their leadership, including quotes from the focus groups, were:

- **Plurality**

Plurality brought the benefit of not being defined by one voice and valuing diversity and difference.

- **Collective leadership**

Collaborating to ensure we deliver well.

- **Learner focus**

    The learner focus means they are dynamic, will make a difference to meet needs of young

    people who have been through difficulties.

    … will go the extra mile for learners.

    Share a common vision of working for students' progression to great destinations.

- **Equality**

  No discrimination and this provides a different feel to the organisation.

- **Local and embedded** in the local community

  Being local brings a commitment, pride and investment in the college.

- **Family**

  It is like a family business and has dynamics of over-protection and care which can inhibit progress and performance. 'Looking after your own' gives a sense of security, pride, and protection. However, when organisations behave as a closed system, the possibility of becoming cut off from, and unresponsive to, the environment becomes a potential problem area.

- **External factors**

  Because of external pressures, we jump to what is said externally and don't say this is what we stand for and this is what we believe in.

- **Lack of direction and confusion**

  [Theses] are the biggest essences.

- **Resilience**

  We've been a maggot, now we're in a chrysalis, soon we will break through.

Leadership symptoms in the FE sector as a whole

Key leadership symptoms in the FE sector identified were as follows:

- **External pressures and constraints**

'We are defined by government agendas'. Government agendas and external factors defined the scope of activity in the sector.

'Governance and restrictions'. External control of who we want to be restricts the caring nature of the task. Constrained by public sector but without the finance of the private sector. Tension between profit and deficit.

'Constant Policy changes'. Skills gap and lack of understanding of what's needed on the ground in providing opportunities for young people.

- **Lack of direction**

We are moving forward without changing.

FE says it responds to the needs of the labour market, but it doesn't, and there is a gap between intent and action.

We are old and recycled as a sector and a country.

Vision is limited with a policy for everything and too much focus on money and cuts – risk and litigation averse and not inspiring the country educationally.

- **Wrong values**

FE as a whole is about money and results and agendas set externally and the sector takes the brunt of all the cuts and is in a squeezed position.

- **Survival is a symptom**

It's all about survival, reactive leadership when you are in debt and FE leaders become managers not leaders. Network events are full of self-doubt about leadership, both about finance and results, but perhaps we have more power than we think.

- **Development versus compliance**

There is a dissonance generated by a tense and unresolvable conflict between the caring, developmental aspect of the task, and the shifting and inconsistent demands of governors and government.

- **Providing opportunities**

Providing opportunity for those who have not done well at school to experience learning and success in a different way.

This is highly unappreciated. FE is a phenomenal sector, but we lose sight of what we deliver and its great importance.

More work is required to refine the leadership symptoms, as the focus groups had finished their work on this task, and we realised more time and thought is needed over a period of time to get deeper into what the essence of leadership in each context. See *Recommendations* for further thoughts.

5. Discussion and recommendations

5.1 Discussion

Dame Minuoche Shafik, Director of the London School of Economics and Political Science, wrote an opinion piece in the *Financial Times* on 6 September 2018, setting out the challenges to FE and claimed that radical new thinking is required. She writes:

> Britain's long-term approach to education and skills also requires radical new thinking. … Technical and vocational education colleges have been starved of resources and subject to frequent policy meddling, affecting the quality and sustainability of their courses. … The apprenticeship levy is proving difficult to implement. Productivity levels remain poor and skills

development patchy. Declining attachment between employers and their workers could mean less investment in training whilst automation increases the need for upgrading skills. … Education is a powerful determinate of life chances and the economic case for skills development is compelling. It is time we started to debate more radical options (Shafik ,2018).

Shafik's reflections summarise the big picture in terms of the impact of resourcing and policy meddling on the quality and sustainability of FE provision. She goes on to propose a new funding approach as a radical solution, offering 18-year-olds a loan entitlement for lifelong learning that would create a more level playing field between technical and academic education and begin to address intergenerational inequities, i.e. investing in the next generation. Her suggestion for a structural rebalancing of finances is welcome, and yet our findings suggest that restructuring finances is clearly not enough. There is a greater challenge that needs to be addressed in parallel to a radical rethink of the material economy. This greater challenge is that of changing the 'libidinal economy' in FE. The libidinal economy refers to the emotional and unconscious dynamics that drive individual, social and organisational behaviour (see Stavrakakis, 2007; Lytotard, 1993).

> In 1915, Freud claimed that 'the consummation of psychoanalytic research' was his 'discovery' of the '**economic** point of view', which explains the psyche or self as an **economy** of **libidinal** energy that can be discharged in physical activity, locked up unproductively in neurosis, or productively invested in mental labour (Bennet, 2010).

It's the (libidinal) economy, stupid!

Paraphrasing Bill Clinton's famous slogan, 'It's the (libidinal) economy, stupid!' reminds us that, in 2018, the libidinal economy now dominates the leadership landscape. The shock win by Donald Trump, the surprise vote for Brexit and the rise of populist leaders from left and right across Europe, show how political leaders who understand and can harness the libidinal economy are in the ascendance, and those who are playing by the 20th century rules, utilising more functional and rational approaches, are fast losing the game. In organisations, this means how affective feelings, unconscious dynamics and the emotional life of the organisation work together to create a libidinal

economy that drives, inspires, limits and shapes what does and doesn't work. The libidinal economy is influenced, but not determined by, the material economy. For example, more resources may raise morale, but, as we know, wealth doesn't guarantee happiness any more than surplus resources guarantee a healthy and dynamic organisational culture. The libidinal economy is also about how people consciously and unconsciously gain pleasure from their lives and work, both individually and collectively. Unconscious pleasure is often counter-intuitive and paradoxical, and, because of this, it is ignored in mainstream managerial theory. Yet, psychoanalysis teaches us that people gain 'pleasure from their displeasure', i.e. people gain satisfaction from their dissatisfaction (Stavrakakis, 2007). This explains why so many attempts to change organisational culture and individual/team behaviour fail. People are attached to their unconscious enjoyment, and, while consciously they agree with the changes proposed, unconsciously they are invested in maintaining the status quo and resisting change (Western, 2018).

Challenge 1.

A key finding from our research is that in the FE sector, the libidinal economy shows how people gain unconscious pleasure from their displeasure, e.g. complaining about the cuts and impositions from external forces, but also taking pleasure from the act of complaining. This has a knock-on effect of 'letting people off the hook', as it's the 'bad other' doing things to us, rendering us as the powerless. There are many counter narratives to this, and the libidinal economy changes in different places. However, throughout our research there was a sense that a reboot of the libidinal economy is necessary if real change is going to take place. Leaders, and especially distributed leadership, will be key actors to influence this change.

Recommendation 1. Creating networks of desire: *Transforming the libidinal economy of FE*
Influencing the libidinal economy means paying attention to the 'micropolitics of desire' (Lyotard,1993). It is the libidinal economy that must change in order to create the space for the

sector to attain its aspirational goal of becoming an Eco-Leadership-led sector. The FE sector is the

closest educational sector to the workplace. To function successfully as a 'national educational,

training, lifelong learning and developmental dynamo', that prepares students for the workplace

challenges ahead, it must itself understand and mirror the dynamic and disruptive workplace

changes taking place. This means shifting the FE sector's libidinal economy, to let go of emotional

and unconscious attachments and investments to being the poor neighbour of HE, or to being a

slow-moving body responding to government policy 'meddling' with heavy resignation. It means

rediscovering the desire and confidence to step into a different space. Grasping the moment of

truth, that now is the time for the technical and vocational skills sector to step up to the most

exciting challenges and opportunities presented to us by the digital age. Never before have skills,

vocational and lifelong training been so important. The speed of change demands speed of

response. Funding alone won't achieve this challenge; a leap of faith and a dynamic energy is

required to create the desire for success. An FE sector that is filled with distributed leaders, who are

driven by desire and powered on by the shared enjoyment that comes from full engagement and

meeting challenges with resilience and innovative mindsets, is what is needed. Leaders everywhere,

confident and co-creating 'networks of desire' with students and stakeholders; this the libidinal

economy required.

Challenge 2. Rediscovering leadership development for the 21st Century

Mainstream leadership development approaches focus on knowledge transfer and training

individual leadership skills and techniques, as set out in the illustration below (taken from Western,

2013, 2019). It is highly dubious how effective this traditional method of leadership development is,

and high rates of leadership dissatisfaction in most surveys, reveal that something in the current

system isn't working.

Figure 11. Leadership development

Leadership Development: Individual Focused Skills & Techniques
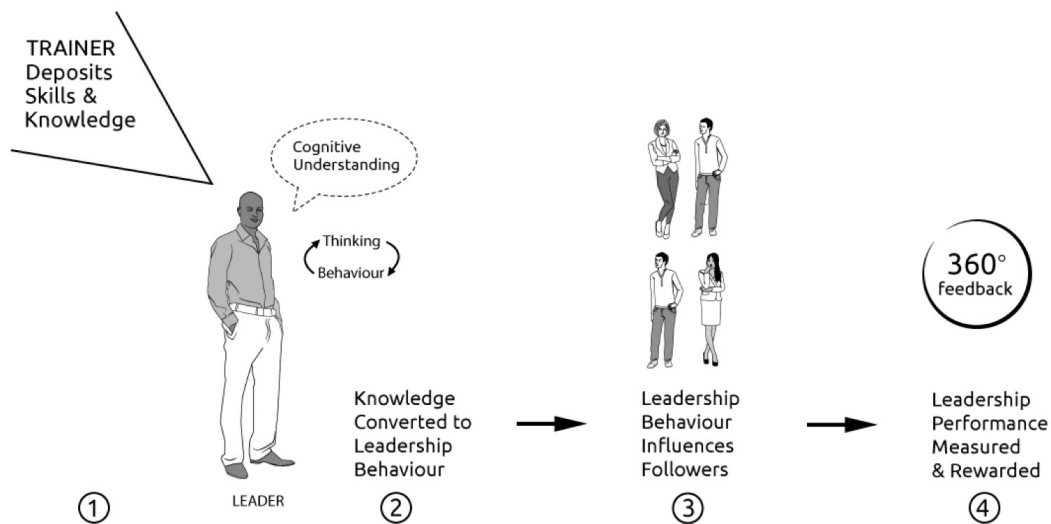
Recommendation 2. New approaches to leadership development: *Eco-Leadership formation*

The findings of this research point to a shift towards Eco-Leadership. Developing leadership throughout an organisation is a different task than taking a few high-potential leaders and putting them through a training programme as per the illustration above. The six following issues are part of the recommendations for developing leaders.

1. Leadership development should be tailored for *local and specific requirements*. Each college and organisation will have its local context, history and specific requirements. There is no magic bullet and no singular universal approach.

2. *No personal development without organisational development.* Leadership development is a collective as well as an individual endeavour. Any leadership development design needs to have binocular vision, i.e. to focus on both individuals and the whole at the same time.

3. *Eco-Leadership as a meta-theory*. A coherent theory of leadership is required to hold

together different parts of the whole. Eco-Leadership can act as a meta-theory, a) to deliver the new distributed leadership approaches that address the demands of today's networked society and b) to integrate and oversee how the other leadership approaches can work in an integrated way across the organisation. Eco-leaders focus on getting the right balance of controller, messiah and Therapist Leadership within the organisation, while holding on to the big picture of networked leadership approaches to ensure connectivity and integration take place.

4. *Informal leadership development spaces.* Creating organisational spaces for leadership to flourish informally is a vital aspect of leadership development that is often ignored. This is not easily measurable and therefore left out by many HR and OD departments, yet it is key to influencing change.

5. *Mobilising lateral networks to develop leaders*. Utilising mentoring, peer-coaching, reverse mentoring and other peer-to-peer leadership development approaches such as leadership exchanges and online communities of practice. Leadership development works best when people learn from each other and learn through experience. It's not a top–down knowledge transfer game! Being a mentor and being mentored are developmental to both parties, and are connective activities.

6. *Leadership formation*

Leaders are formed not trained, they are formed through experience, formal and informal.

> Leadership formation is a holistic approach that works in multidimensional ways utilizing current best practice, such as mentoring and peer-learning in communities of practice. It emphasizes self-directed, practice-focused and networked approaches and aligns leadership development with organisational development and culture, utilizing the Eco-Leadership discourse to focus on generating and distributing leadership, rather than focusing on behavioural leadership approaches with an elite group of leaders (Western, 2019).

Challenge 3. Gaps

Arising from our research, two clear gaps appeared in the FE sector that need to be addressed. First, a gap in shared understanding of leadership and its different layers and approaches. Second, having structured spaces to empower FE staff to safely explore, with others from different parts of the

organisation, the challenges that need to be addressed. We were surprised by the power of the

research process and how it mobilised people's desire for change. Change does not come about

from some external dictum, or from some future grand strategic plan or idea, but from many acts of

leadership at micro-levels. Our experience of facilitating the focus groups to discuss leadership using

a clear framework, which gave participants a shared language and an individual attachment (they all

had taken the questionnaire), proved pivotal. As one participant said, 'I have learned more about

leadership and about the way our organisation works in the past two hours than ever before',

another commented, 'This is the first time I have talked to a diverse group from across the

organisation, I have learnt so much from their different perspectives', and another said 'I wish the

whole college could participate in this discussion, then real change would begin to take place'.

This leads to our third and final recommendation.

Recommendation 3. Orchestrating a 'big leadership conversation' across the sector.

We recommend that a big leadership conversation (BLC) takes place across the sector. BLCs should

take place in as many organisations in the FE sector as possible, leading to regional conversations,

then national conversations.

These BLCs will require very thoughtful design, and be expertly facilitated i.e. they will require

sponsoring and investment, and expert leadership. This pilot research project revealed how a

carefully-designed, structured and facilitated approach can inspire and lead to a shift in thinking. The

move from therapist to Eco-Leadership was a fundamental shift. Each of the researchers witnessed

shifts of thinking and learning take place in their telephone interviews and focus group work. The

lessons learned from this are set out below.

A big leadership conversation requires the following parts:

1. *A shared framework of leadership to facilitate a coherent discussion.* A shared-leadership

    language is required. Leadership embraces diverse approaches and these need to be

    accounted for, and the framework should easily be understood in relation to their actual

work. The four discourses approach worked well in our research, and we would recommend it for future use.

2. *Individual engagement and investment.* The online questionnaire was pivotal to the success of this project as it took leadership from being a woolly concept, to something each individual owned, i.e. they had 'skin-in-the-game', as each had their own personal leadership reports, stating their leadership preferences. The questionnaire also acts as a prompt to think about the different aspects of leadership in their organisation. This is vitally important as people come to the conversations prepared.

3. *Building networks across organisations.* Bringing together staff from different levels, from teaching and non-teaching roles and different parts of the organisation, led to enriched conversations. This process embodies and embraces what Eco-Leadership means, it builds networks while encouraging connectivity, sharing best practice, and developing new understandings from diversity.

4. *Group size.* A BLC can include all members of an organisation, but discussion groups need to be not less than 8 and not more than 16. This optimises the input of individuals whilst ensuring enough diversity exists in the group. Large groups can be accommodated, even whole organisations, but smaller groups are needed in this process to enable trusting conversations to take place.

5. *Designing platforms.* Designing a BLC will include focusing on how to collate and disseminate information to ensure the conversation continues formally and informally. Digital and face-to-face platforms will be needed to facilitate different preferences for how we converse with each other.

6. *From local to global and back.* The BLC should stimulate local conversations and change, that is in teams, departments and organisations. It should also stimulate global conversations and change, in regional, national and even in international forums.

7. *The medium is the message.* BLCs won't come up with a final solution to the question of what leadership is required, or what changes are needed. It won't produce a finessed strategic plan. The process will, however, aim to create the libidinal economy that evokes the desire required, to lead local and national change. The BLC as a medium is the message, it will enact in the present, the future desired; it will create dialogue, reflective spaces, empower new leaders and new voices to be heard, it will create new networks and connections – in short, it will deliver the Eco-Leadership the sector aspires to.

Conclusion

This report speaks for itself; radical new thinking is clearly required to deliver the aspired-to Eco-Leadership approach that will drive the change required in the FE sector. A radical distribution of leadership, greater connectivity and integration in organisations, a dynamic libidinal economy, and a new engagement with the wider ecosystems of workplaces, governance bodies and society will deliver dynamic change. How to begin this? Our recommendations suggest with a big leadership conversation, a place where distributed leadership is enacted in the present. A place where each organisation can reposition itself in relation to leadership and organisational change. Where organisations and the sector utilise the power of engagement, connectivity and dialogue, sharing experience, knowledge and best practice to break up organisational silos and fixed mindsets.

The very positive news is that the transformative changes required have been recognised from within the sector itself. The shift from the preferred and practised Therapist Leadership to the aspired to Eco-Leadership came about through engagement, reflection and open dialogue. Our research engagement with the FE sector revealed to us that 'networks of desire' already exist in abundance across the sector. The sector faces a challenge and a choice; will it enable these 'networks of desire' to exponentially grow or will it stifle them? Creating spaces for leadership to

flourish everywhere is the best possible guarantee of positive future for FE, and also for those students and workplaces it serves.

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Appendix 1. Telephone interviews: Researcher guide and template

15-minute interviews

Introductory remarks. Thank you for participating in this research project. The interview will last around 15 minutes and is confidential. All the data collected in this research project is anonymised and individuals will not be identified in the results shared with the college/organisation or in the overall report for the learning and skills sector. We do invite the whole learning and skills sector to use the findings for a bigger conversation about leadership and followership in the system.

Structure of Interview
Agreement with statement
Scaling system
1 = Do not agree at all   10 = Completely agree

Online survey result

Therapist	Eco-leader	Messiah	Controller
Gender			
Teaching role			
Leadership			
Age			
Workplace			

Semi-structured interview

1.   To what extent does your report match how you perceive yourself as a leader/follower?

2.   To what extent were you surprised by the result?

Any comments.

3.   How closely does your report correspond to your own beliefs about what good leadership looks like in practice?

4.   How closely would you say your results reflect the leadership style in your team or department?

Comments: If there is a **difference**: how do you manage the difference?

5.   How closely do you think your results reflect the leadership style of the senior leadership team?

Comments: What are the differences or similarities?

6.   Please enter in the box below the leadership discourses you think dominate the leadership culture in the organisation (1 is the most dominant)

1	
2	
3	
4	

7. What leadership discourse would you like to see becoming more dominant in the college/organisation?

☐ Controller   ☐ Therapist   ☐ Messiah   ☐ Eco-Leadership?

a) Can you say why and what difference it would make?

b) What leadership discourse would you like to see becoming less dominant in the college/organisation?

☐ Controller   ☐ Therapist   ☐ Messiah   ☐ Eco-Leadership?

Can you say why and what difference it would make?

8. What are the main strengths of your college/organisation in terms of leadership? (Please give some examples, if possible.)

9. What are the main challenges for changing the leadership culture in your college/organisation? (Please give some examples, if possible.)

Any final comments on leadership in your organisation you would like to make.

Thank you

Appendix 2. Focus group: Researcher guide and template

Purpose

    a) To use creative methodologies to explore leadership in the college.
    b) To reflect on the research data results from the questionnaire.
    c) To gain qualitative, rich and textured research data for the Hidden Leadership research project.

Aim

    a) To reflect on the research data in relation to the discourses and current practice in the organization.
    b) To discover gaps and what is missed in the discourse analysis and interview data we have.
    c) To use creative methodologies to discover 'the symptoms of leadership'.

The focus group will take two hours and has 3 parts
    1. Images and associations
    2. Reflections on questionnaire results
    3. Symptoms of leadership

Activity 1. Images and associations
Quickly draw a picture, image or symbol of leadership in the college, without using words
(flip charts and pens).

Share these pictures
Ask people to associate to the pictures displayed, before asking individuals to say something about their own picture.

Sharing dialogue
What is their overall impression of leadership from looking the pictures?
Collect themes and identify key themes for the group.

Outcome for group
Agree key themes that arise from this exercise

Activity 2. Reflections on questionnaire results
What are their reflections on the results of the questionnaire.
Begin by giving a 5–minute overview of the leadership discourses to refresh people.

- There is no right or wrong discourse.
- All are necessary in organisations – the question is balance of each.
- The Eco-Leadership discourse is the most contemporary – relating to the network society – it also acts like a meta-discourse – so in any organisation, an eco-leader will look at the balance of the other 3 discourses in the organisation.

Share a printed sheet with all questionnaire charts and results on it.

Begin with open discussion – surprises, reflections on results.

Open discussion

Aspirational discourses

Invite the focus group to identify the ideal mix and balance of discourses required to take their

organisations forward.

Strengths, challenges and gaps

- What are the main strengths of the college in terms of leadership?
(Give examples)
- What are the main challenges for leadership in the college?

(Give examples)
- What key areas of leadership development are required in the college?

(Give examples)

- Mind the gap: What's been left out?
Other comments on their experience of leadership in the college

Activity 3. The symptoms of leadership

Work in two small groups:

Group 1. What is special, particular, unusual, unique that shapes the leadership and followership culture **in the college/organisation**? What is the unspoken essence that informs leadership? Name the symptom of the college to share.

Group 2. What is special, particular, unusual, unique that shapes the leadership and followership culture **in the sector as a whole**? What is the unspoken essence that informs leadership in the sector as a whole? Name the symptom of the sector to share.

Group share 'symptoms' with each other.

What is the unique theme or essence, the symptom of leadership, in the college that shapes how leaders and followers interact?

Ending
Any final questions and reminder about confidentiality.

Appendix 3, Contributors

Firstly, a big thanks to FETL for sponsoring this research, especially to Dame Ruth Silver, Ricky McMenemy and Ceri Goodrum.

Also, thanks to our Advisory group.

Mark Dawe
Prof. Johnathon Gosling
Prof. Martin McNamara
Dr. Lynne Sedgmore CBE
Jill Westerman CBE

We would like to thank all who contributed to this research project.

Dr Simon Western, designed, project-managed and led the research and was supported by Ben Neal and Helen Shaw in undertaking the research in organisations. Simon, Ben and Helen share bio-notes below. Also, a big thank you to Sandra Logan, who supported the research project throughout, working on finance, project oversight and taking care of all administrative functions with great skill.

And finally, to others who helped in delivering this project
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Martin Williamson
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Researcher biographies

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Simon is CEO and founder of Analytic-Network Coaching Ltd, an avant-garde coaching company whose purpose is to 'coach leaders to act in good faith to create the good society', www.analyticnetwork.com. He is an internationally-recognised thought-leader on leadership, coaching and organisational behaviour. Simon runs an advanced coaching training course to develop new Eco-Leadership approaches to help leaders adapt to today's disruptive, network society. With over 200 registered coaches across the globe, Analytic-Network Coaching is growing fast. He shares his thinking as an international keynote speaker, academic and author of three acclaimed books: *Global leadership perspectives: Insights and analysis* (with Eric-Jean Gautier), *Leadership: a critical text* 2nd Ed and *Coaching and mentoring: A critical text*. Simon works with senior leaders on strategy, organisational change and works in depth on personal and leadership challenges. Bringing critical theory, networked theory and psychoanalytic thinking to help leaders develop new insights, act ethically and create change in organisational life is key to his work.

Recent clients: Global leadership team, Microsoft; Global OD Director and team, HSBC Bank; Health CEOs; Education CEOs and national advisors; Global leadership team, Caterpillar; CEO and team, hospice; and IT start-ups.

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Ben Neal

Ben Neal is a management and leadership coach and organisational consultant, with over ten years' experience working with leaders, managers and teams who work with and deliver services to some of the most demanding and vulnerable demographics in society. This positions Ben's practice as especially suited to those experiencing high levels of stress, pressure, and performance demands.

Having started by taking up a variety of clinical roles in the NHS, Ben moved into the field of consulting, training and coaching in 2010. Since then, he has worked extensively across voluntary, public and private sectors, with clients ranging from celebrity chefs and authors to executives running gold-mining operations in South Africa.

Ben is especially interested in gaining clarification between individual performance and systemic issues, and understanding the competing demands and pressure generated between client and management systems.

- Institute of Leadership and Management Level 7 Coach

- Certified Analytic Network Coach

- MA: Consulting and Leading in Organizations (Tavistock Clinic)

- Designed and co-directed the Leadership and followership program for the business and marketing department at University of Cork, Ireland

- Fifteen years' clinical experience in NHS teams

- In demand as a teacher, visiting various courses yearly and running workshops in the UK, Ireland and South Africa

- Visiting lecturer on the MA in 'Consulting and Leading in Organizations' and 'Doctorate in Educational Psychology' (Tavistock Clinic)

- Runs the ten-week psychoanalytic theory program at the New School of Existential Psychotherapy

- Has worked extensively as staff on Group relations conferences in the UK

- Former Director of OPUS Consultancy service (web link)

Specialist interests include: Resilience, high impact environments, mediation, burn out, performance management, gender issues

Recent work with teams and individuals:

- Working with a senior executive who has lost his confidence

- Working with a senior manager who feels unable to support the emotional needs of her team members

- Supporting a new management team to develop a strong and effective working partnership and buy-in from the existing team

- Advising a senior manager on how to manage the complexities of gender and LGBT dynamics in her service

- Coaching and supporting two staff members who have been affected by a traumatic episode in the workplace

Helen Shaw

Helen is a leadership and organisational development consultant, coach, educator and researcher who works with individuals, teams and organisations in the voluntary, public and private sectors. She is interested in working alongside people to find creative and different ways of approaching working-life challenges. She has over twenty years' experience leading a human rights charity – successfully navigating complex political and legal milieu to bring about lasting changes to practice and policy. An experienced professional with board-level experience in both the public and voluntary sectors, she integrates a wealth of operational and strategic expertise to her consultancy practice. She is passionate about confronting discrimination and has a longstanding interest in, and commitment to, creating structures and pathways that enable marginalised people to speak directly to those at the heart of the policy-making and political process.

Helen was a senior lecturer at Birmingham University on the NHS Leadership Academy Elizabeth Garrett Anderson MSc in Healthcare Leadership, and leads the module on consulting and leading organisations for the Tavistock & Portman NHS foundation trust MA in Consulting and Leading in Organisations: psychodynamic and systemic approaches. She is currently studying for a doctorate focussing on the challenges for leadership and governance in supporting organisational learning in the aftermath of serious incidents.

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- Module Lead, Consulting and Leading in Practice for the MA Consulting and Leading in Organisations: psychodynamic and systemic approaches, Tavistock & Portman NHS Foundation Trust.

- Tutor – organisational observation module for Child, Community and Educational Psychology professional doctorate the Tavistock & Portman NHS Foundation Trust

- Member Tavistock social work practice supervisor development programme team

Recent work with individuals, teams and organisations includes:

- Action learning with senior leadership team in a housing consultancy company

- Coaching middle and senior local authority leaders

- Evaluating the impact of voluntary sector organisations – Clinks, Southall Black Sisters, End Violence Against Women.

- Supporting creation and support of legal team for multiple death inquest

- Leadership development for senior team in life science medical research charity