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REDEFINING LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Abstract

This article explores the role of leadership development in higher education and considers its heightened importance within a context characterized by 21st century challenges. It aims to discuss the historical evolution of leadership development, pedagogical principles and best practices by global trends. In addition, the pressures of technological change, demography and resource scarcity make strong leadership imperative. The structured design of leadership development programs designed to develop individual leader capabilities within academic institutions and cultivate future talent is also considered. Through training workshops, mentoring relationships, coaching sessions and experiential learning courses these programs work to develop leaders who can understand institutional dynamics in higher education and promote academic quality through a strengthened educational environment.

Keywords

Leadership Development, Higher Education, Global Trends, Pedagogical Leadership, Best Practices, Succession Planning, Experiential Learning, Institutional Resilience, Academic Excellence, Societal Impact

Introduction

Leadership development in higher education is the designed and intentional processes, strategies or programs that aimed to increase individual leadership capacity within academic institutions. It is also intended to be for students who will one day find themselves in leadership positions, as well not just administrators and faculty. Leadership development programmes aim to create leaders who can navigate the many difficulties that their institutions confront, stimulate entrepreneurship and academic achievement as well as nurture an institutional climate of goodwill (Bolden et al., 2014).

This changing academic landscape are the pressures and possibilities of external policies, budget constraints, technological disruptions highlight the urgent need for leadership development in academia. Not only is effective leadership paramount in achieving success for the institution, but also it advances an ethos of academic integrity, inclusiveness and innovation that supports excellence overall in student teaching.

Leadership development is also important for succession planning in educational institutions. There is a growing urgency to develop the next generation of leaders as many current academic leaders near retirement. It is a complex and intentional exploration, with the purpose of discovering and cultivating leadership capability so that it may be passed from one generation to the next: our future leaders are being instructed on how their institution holds together in order for them to continue its mission.

Leadership development in higher education has evolved a great deal, both in terms of perception and application. In the early 20th century, leadership in universities and colleges were conceptualized as an administrative enterprise, led by senior faculty (often without any formal training) overseeing institutional operations within academic structures.

In the late 20th century, leadership development became a formal focus in higher education. This led universities to set up standalone leadership development

centres and programmatic response designed for emerging academic leaders to critically address challenges, ranging from strategic planning, management of resources through people's efficient use as well academic excellence conversation. This era also heralded a trend towards leadership in a broader sense within institutions ranging from department chairs to college presidents.

In the 21st century, leadership development in higher education has grown and evolved to address these new complexities on campus. This requires a more flexible and resilient leadership given the growing emphasis on international perspectives, diversity & inclusion as well online/hybrid deliveries. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced that people need these types of leaders, individuals who are skilled at leading in crises and fostering creativity during ambiguity (Fitzgerald & Mullen, 2020).

Effective programs in leadership development are purposefully structured to develop and facilitate effective leaders of organizations both now, and ahead into the future. These programs consist of a number of parts that are meant to carry out particular functions in the entire development process. The blending of these components follows a wealth of research and applied practice in the field for leadership development. This expanded session will take a deeper dive into each of these four types of elements, leadership training workshops, mentoring and coaching, experiential learning opportunities, and leadership assessment tools – looking at what they are for (the objectives), how they work to accomplish their goals still early but promising methodologies or frameworks based on current knowledge that supports their effectiveness.

Leadership programs

Many leadership training workshops serve as the basic building blocks of a number from which most people development programs. Workshops are deep-dives into various leadership-related subject areas, usually customized to hone in on the dynamics and drivers within higher education. For example, Transformational coaching Training. They usually cover topics like strategic planning, decision-

making, conflict resolution, communication, empowerment and emotional intelligence and change management.

One of the essential domain areas is strategic planning and decision-making. These workshops include strategic planning and decision-making to support academic leaders in becoming proficient long-term goal setters that operate consistently with the mission of vision for their institution. The program trains leaders in understanding these internal and external drivers, weighing risks, devising strategies that lead to institutional health and competitive advantage. Case studies and simulation exercises were the most frequently identified mechanisms for experiential strategic thinking (Rowley & Sherman, 2003).

Conflict resolution and communication are essential tools to ensure the well-being of students in an academic environment. These types of workshops can be used to enhance leadership skills using them as approaches for handling conflicts if within the faculty, between students or administration. Leaders are encouraged to incorporate techniques such as active listening, mediation and negotiation in order to help them in effectively engaging constructive conversation and dispute resolution which should ideally improve relationships between stakeholders whilst supporting wider institutional goals.

Sought-after emotional intelligence (EI) is one of those essential leadership competencies. By attending sessions on EI, leaders can explore and control emotions from within them that either make or break the outcomes. It is especially critical when it comes to managing change, as leaders must lead their organizations through periods of transition without sapping morale and reducing productivity. Leaders who increase their EI, can deal more effectively with the stress and confusion of change in an organisation.

The theoretical learning and practical application combined is the success point of these Leadership Training Workshops. The training provides a dynamic learning environment where participants engage in interactive exercises, role-plays and small group discussions that encourage self-reflection and skill building. In

addition, when we gather in these sessions to do this collective work it also offers the space for us leaders who stop and share our experiences with one another fostering peer learning which helps build a solid leadership community.

So then, organizations must be able to offer their up-and-coming leaders personalized guidance and support in the form of mentoring and coaching in order to complete a leadership development structure. Although they are both one-to-one exchanges, mentoring and coaching often serve two different functions that add to each other.

Mentoring and coaching

Mentoring is a relationship-based process whereby experienced leaders (mentors) offer advice, guidance and support to less experienced leaders (mentees). In higher education, mentoring is typically focused on helping emerging leaders learn the intricacies of academic administration (e.g., How to do a budget!) develop their leadership style; and expand their professional networks. It tells them about the culture of a place, how things are working there and much more while providing feedback on mentees performance and development. The mentoring relationship can last many years, providing stages of deep and meaningful then when personalized exchanges in the context which can contribute to mentee's development on a personal and professional level (Kram, 1985).

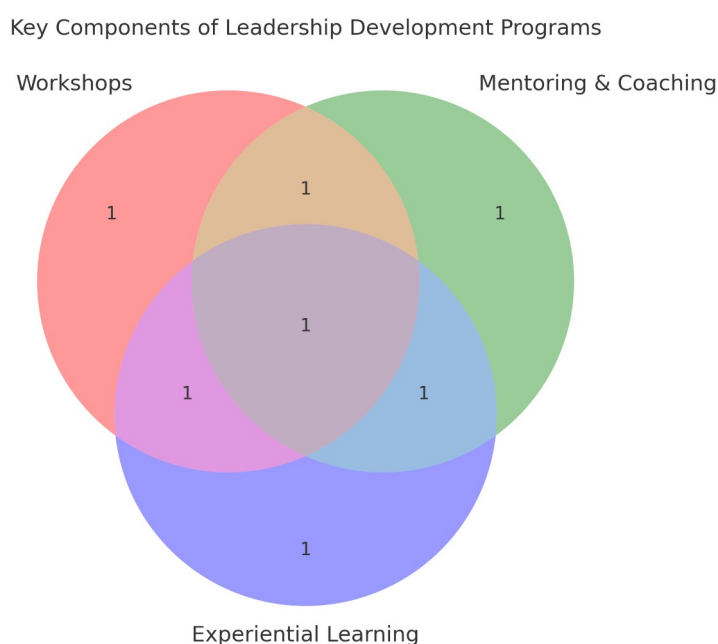
A structured approach, such as goal setting, ongoing meetings and mutually agreed expectations are required to effectively mentor. These programs should also train the mentors to be able to give constructive feedback and help in a successful manner.

With a focus on goals and forms to fill out with coaching, it is more structured as compared to mentoring. A professional coach partners with a leader to develop skills, clear obstacles or establish and meet specific objectives. Coaching is shorter-term and more intensive, with a sharper focus on immediate outcomes. In the domain of higher education, coaching may help with leadership presence and communication styles, or perhaps negotiating institutional politics.

These types of coaching are often the most helpful in tackling immediate issues or assisting those making a leadership transition, like moving from one role to another. Coaching is customized, and as such it enables strategies that directly serve the leader's needs and current contexts. Studies suggest that coaching can increase leadership effectiveness, with higher levels of self-awareness, decision making and job performance reported by leaders after some form of appropriate intervention.

Mentoring and coaching both support a leadership development approach, which is oriented towards personalized-contextual help that complements the more general goals of any type of formal leadership training program. Together, they provide a solid foundation for training the next era of academic leaders.

Figure 1. Essential Components of Leadership Development Programs



The Venn diagram provides a visual image of what leadership development should look like in higher education. Three circles are for the components:

Workshops (Red)

Mentoring & Coaching (Green)

Experiential Learning (Blue)

These overlapping areas show how the parts intersect and complement one another in a leadership development program. At the central overlap, where all three circles come together, lies an integration of each component, making them golden triangles when working collaboratively and interdependently to develop a comprehensive leadership approach.

Directing a major project in the institution gives new leaders an opportunity to use their theoretical knowledge in reality. They often involve working across departments on different projects, money handling and strategic standpoints that help leaders to own their capability of leadership. Training during the answers to this question also might include learning experiences such as oversight of a new academic program or leading campus-wide initiative in [for example] help them (Kolb, 2015).

Cross-functional teams give leaders exposure to additional portions of the institution and a wider breadth view on how departments work together toward the same goal. The exposure to this kind of work is essential both in seeing the world as a whole and learning how different groups can complement one another.

International assignments because the face of education is often trans-continental today, this a big part to get right in downstream programming for key initiators/leaders as well. Here leaders have a chance to be exposed in different schools, geographies and leadership practices These sorts of experiences are critical to developing cultural competence, global awareness and the capability to lead in diverse contexts (Stensaker et al., 2008).

The authentic nature of experiential learning, after all where leaders learn by doing. This on-the-job training reinforces the lessons that they learnt in their formal education and allows them to grow into a role confidently, by using what you will tell; may be even better. Real-world problem-solving will make leaders

more critical thinkers, and decision-makers; crucial skills for becoming effective as a leader.

As part of the leadership development process, leaders benefit from assessing their strengths and weaknesses some excellent tools for doing this are in any number or form. Typically, these tools are used to set a benchmark for leaders' competencies, track progress and support an adaptive development journey.

360-degree feedback

360-degree feedback is one of the most commonly used assessment tools in leadership development. For reference, feedback is usually in the form of communication, decision making and team handling as well as matters relating to Emotional Quotient. Feedback allows leaders to better understand their own strengths and weaknesses, because it offers an opportunity for them to see how they are viewed by peers in different parts of the organization (Fleenor et al., 2008).

Personality assessments, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) or Big Five Personality Traits is widely used in leadership development to assist leaders understand their personality characteristics and how these traits affect this performance of a leader. Knowing their personalities can also help leaders become aware of how they naturally operate, apply their strengths and be proactive about blind spots. For instance, a naturally introverted leader may need to develop his/her visibility and communication within the organization.

Other instruments, the Situational Leadership Model or Transformational Leadership Inventory, for example, provide a measurement of how an individual prefers to lead. These inventories are designed to alert leaders of their prevailing leadership style and how it fits with the uniqueness of their team or institution. Leaders can become more effective by accommodating various situations as well as with diverse teams' founders.

Emotional intelligence is a key elemental build of successful leadership abilities and as such assessments to rank leaders based on their ability to recognize

emotion, control behavior by the emotions or combine Emotion with Thought are often used (EI – managers). Like the EQi profile, which measures five factors of emotional Intelligence: Self-awareness – Being aware that our all kinds feelings--happiness everywhere from mild boredom / sadness / anger / joy elations. These assessments help leaders uncover areas where they may be in need of building better emotional awareness or interpersonal effectiveness. High emotional intelligence is connected with beneficent team building, better conflict management and enhanced management as explained by Goleman et al. (2002).

Competency models are a framework to identify the skills and actions necessary for good leadership within an environment. These models are typically developed to capture the values, mission, and strategic goals of an entity. These competencies are then compared to the assessment results of leaders and used help development efforts for those in a leadership role. Lucia and Lepsinger (1999) argue that competency models are key to ensuring the fit of leadership development with organization needs and priorities.

Using leadership assessment tools is an industry best practice for everyone working on their development, because it offers objective data that will help determine the actions they take and allow them to monitor progress so as not to lose sight of where you are headed. This way, when leaders know their strengths and the areas, they need to improve on most in line with what is a priority for them from an improvement perspective, or where it would make more difference, then those are back into development activities targeted only at these needs/goals. In addition, frequent evaluation can enhance accountability and guarantee that leadership growth programs are actually attaining what they set out to achieve.

The components of leadership development i.e., attending an educational workshop and working with a mentor, or being involved in coaching/multiple experiences/assessments & workshops–were related to higher self-assessed effectiveness among academic leaders primarily through these actions combining together for the creation on-going programmatic work around leader-development.

Based on best practices and research, these fundamentals provide the essential foundation of knowledge that leaders require to understand and lead within higher education.

Incorporating these elements in leadership development programs enables institutions to establish a culture of lifelong learning and continuous improvement so that leaders are ready with the right mindset, skills, behaviors for leading innovation aspiration or tenacity towards success.

Figure 2. How Does Leadership Development Contribute to Much-Needed Institutional Success?

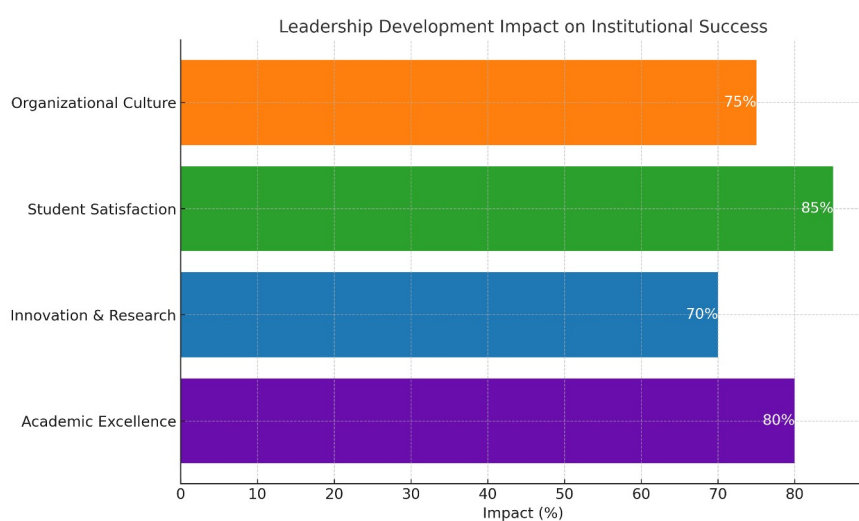


Figure 1.2 demonstrates the impact of Leadership Development on Institutional Performance depicts the percentages that are displayed in the influence of leadership development on institution-wide impact includes four type of metrics However, it does show how leadership development influences in nurturing and also sustaining a great organizational culture. This impact of leadership initiatives at 75% implies that they powerful in the creation and steering culture within an institution. This underscores the robust linkage between leadership development and student satisfaction. The chart presents a huge opportunity with 85% impact, illustrating students' highest satisfaction when leadership is leading the way. The first chart demonstrates that the perceived impact of leadership development on innovation and research within the institution is close to 70%. Thus, leadership efforts are presumed to be vital in building an innovative environment and

attaining the status of a research center. 80 % of how leadership development impacts academic excellence. The only detail this reveals is that leadership from the top drives your academic quality and performance throughout your institution. The specialised area of leadership in higher education which is focused on the teaching and learning activities, often referred to as pedagogical leadership. Whereas other forms of leadership may involve administrative, financial or strategic aspects towards education institutions pedagogical leaders are part and parcel dealing with the heart of these missions characterised by deliberate focus on creating a scholarly community that supports high quality teaching, encourages pedagogical innovation and seeks student success above all else (Hallinger 2011). In order to set the context for teaching practices throughout their organizations, pedagogical leaders in higher education assume an essential function that shapes the educational experience. They are not only to look after the curriculum, but also have a wider responsibility when it comes to creating and maintaining an effective teaching-learning environment.

One of the expectations for all pedagogical leaders is to articulate a clear and compelling Vision regarding How We Teach, Learn in Our School. This vision must also be in harmony with the broader mission of an institution, yet at once both serve and fuel those for which its students and faculty strive. A pedagogical vision binds the faculty in common goals and provides a map for curricular design, practice of instruction, student assessment.

Pedagogical leadership

Part of pedagogical leadership is the ongoing maintenance and growth current teachers. These take the form of professional development workshops, seminars and conferences that are aimed at getting faculty to keep up with new pedagogical interventions, new technological tools or resources, and current research. Pedagogical leaders are also faculty mentors, guiding them through reflective teaching practices and working with instructors to set professional goals for growing their instructional capabilities.

Pedagogical leaders are an important part of creating a culture where faculty members reflect on and refine their teaching practices through individual or group purposeful reflection. Part of this includes having forums where faculty can do some self-reflection, review with peers and collaborative conversations about teaching practices. Reflection on practice aids faculty to mature as educators and apply continued enhancement in their delivery methods specific for all learners (Schön, 1983).

This is the era of change in educational requirements, where every day new technology gets innovated and for this reason pedagogical leaders are one stop enterprise to innovate teaching techniques. To achieve this objective, they will need to work with others in the delivery of educational content-JMOs and their supervisors-perhaps online learning platforms, simulation tools or digital assessment methods-and different pedagogical approaches such as flipped classrooms, project-based learning or collaborative knowledge construction. Pedagogical leaders enable schools to stay at the cutting edge of educational innovation by encouraging and facilitating innovative new teaching methodologies.

The central hallmark of pedagogical leadership should be founded on sophisticated understanding of educational theory and practical applications. To lead the instruction effectively, pedagogical leaders need to understand different educational philosophies and learning strategies used in teaching so that they can help faculty make appropriate curriculum decisions. This theoretical understanding leads to different dimensions which pedagogical leaders embraces within their institutions.

Pedagogical leaders need to implement learning theories like Constructivism, Behaviorism and Cognitivism just named a few. These theories provide us with an understanding of how students learn, which then guides the design of instructor interactions and assessment formats. For example, a constructivist approach might

prompt the institution for more student-centred teaching methods that encourage active learning and critical thinking (Piaget, 1971).

Pedagogical leaders must also understand various instructional design models (e.g., ADDIE: Analyze, Design Develop Implement Evaluate and Bloom's taxonomy). They help to systematically design and evaluate educational programmes, making sure they are conducive with learning outcomes while following leading pedagogical practices.

Finally, pedagogical leaders are charged with the important responsibility of keeping current on research in education. This may include staying up-to-date on research in cognitive science, learning analytics, and educational psychology to inform evidence-based teaching practices. Pedagogical leaders, through evidence-based practices ensure methods and strategies used by staff are made from sound principles of learning and instruction (Hattie, 2009).

In an educational landscape that is changing faster than ever before as a result of the rapid pace of technological advancements, pedagogical leaders have emerged to facilitate change in how technology may be used with their teachers and students. This has to do not only with the acquisition of new tools and platforms, but also with growing strategies that can be used by technology-enhanced education.

Before all else, pedagogical leaders have to make sure their faculty and learners are digitally literate in order to effectively use educational technologies. One of the biggest components is probably training faculty to learn learning management systems (LMS), digital collaboration tools, and other educational technologies that support teaching. Lastly, those serving as pedagogical leaders must examine whether or not these tools have a positive effect and in no way replace the more traditional methods of teaching (Selwyn, 2014).

Innovations in pedagogical leadership is also seen as an emerging field incorporating the use of learning analytics and how it informs our practice to assure better learner outcomes. It can profile the data and performance of how

students learn, what they pay attention for while taking classes which ultimately provide help to new instructor insight Learning analytics is toolset that extract data from student demographic situation. Evidence-based decision making, for use by pedagogical leaders to select appropriate instructional strategies, course design aspects and student interventions.

Applying best practices in pedagogical leadership is a key to ensuring an environment where faculty and students flourish. These practices are grounded in research, experience and institutional knowledge that have shifted with the changing demands of how higher education institutions operate.

Using data and evidence to inform pedagogical practice has always been one of the most powerful moves that can be made in instructional leadership. It covers learning analytics as well not only but also student feedback, peer review and academic progress data. Using data, pedagogical leaders can focus on areas for improvement and determine the effectiveness of any instructional changes that have been made to ensure a continuum between teacher practice and what an institution values as success (Shulman, 2004).

Pedagogical leadership also involves facilitating interfaculty interdisciplinary collaboration. This includes offering chances for faculty across disciplines to collaborate on teaching and research, exchange ideas about best practices that work within their own contexts. Interdisciplinary collaboration by contrast can be expected to produce innovative instructional practices, expanded research options and a learning environment that is more unified meaning students receive an education that will provide them with holistic development.

Ongoing faculty training is essential to help them stay up-to-date with advances in their fields as well as best practices in teaching. Pedagogical leaders need to be able to provide access for the faculty members into professional development resources such as workshops, seminars and conferences; moreover, they also need to instill in them a sense of lifelong learning. Second, this support can ensure that

faculty continually refine their teaching practice and remain in touch with the wider academic community (Day & Sachs 2004).

Conclusion

In addition to specific programmes, an inclusive leadership ethos needs to be instilled institution-wide. It is about building an inclusive environment, and fostering diversity where all members of the leadership team feel comfortable contributing their views. Leadership Cultures drive practices like inclusive decision-making, proactive listening and addressing & breaking down barriers to inclusion at scale. Leadership development programs can support this by training all leaders – not just minority members – on the importance of diversity and inclusion, explaining why it matters to them as individuals and business leaders (Shore et al., 2011).

Leadership development programs, in turn, need to focus on the wider institutional policies and practices which affect diversity and inclusion. This includes promoting policies that contribute to equity in hiring, promotion and compensation along with holding people accountable for meeting diversity and inclusion goals. That includes teaching leaders how to spot and intervene in institutional biases that thwart diversity goals, and how to encourage equitable practices throughout all organizational levels.

Contrary to popular myth though, embedding diversity and inclusion into leadership development has made significant strides but there are many hurdles still left in addressing the issue termining “What Works?!!” These topics include resistance to change, deep seated biases and the challenges associated with addressing intersectional identities in leadership development.

One of the main obstacles is combating institutional inertia. And that resistance can take many shapes – from passive to more aggressive forms of pushback against diversity and inclusivity action. Leadership development programs that aspire to have impact on this resistance need to prepare leaders with the strategies

for building coalitions, involving stakeholders and framing diversity and inclusion as connected both in values but also necessary to mission fulfillment.

The importance of recognizing intersectionality in leadership development programs also poses a setback. Intersectionality describes the hidden servers between various “-isms” such as racism, sexism and classism and provides a way to see how each person's unique identity relates. In other words, according to many opinions, leadership development programs need to be scaffolded in such a way as to take into account these intersections of identities so that all participants are recognized and supported according the particular struggles they face.

Third, there is the measurement issue of how impactful are these D&I initiatives on leadership development. Numerous programs designed to address the lack of diversity in leadership have been implemented, but evaluating whether these initiatives for change are actually achieving their aims is no easy task. These must include quantitative metrics like leader diversity and qualitative hints about overall attitudes of practice and approach to inclusion/experience for your faculty/staff. This knowledge is crucial for improving programs and proving their worth to the stakeholders.

Leadership development programs for higher education need to change with the times; institutions are hiring and serving more diverse populations, so leaders in turn must be able to relate. This means a greater emphasis on diversity/inclusion with global perspectives as institutions want to create leaders ready to interact in different cultures. This is in addition to a requirement for programs that address the intersection of diversity, inclusion and technology, as digital transformation fundamentally reshapes higher education.

Institution leaders, therefore, should continue to make diversity and inclusion central tenants of leadership development in higher education institutions being more intentional about it are likely to have not only executive teams who reflect the population they serve, but also those that can effectively lead an increasingly complex global community.

The quick emergence of technology has influenced leadership development in academia, changing the way we teach and learn about these essential tools for running an institution. It is no secret that leadership development has now integrated into the fabric of higher education and leverage digital tools and platforms to create training virtually accessible, personal & effective. However, these innovations bring with them new challenges that require leaders to have a sophisticated grasp on technology and its implications for their institutions.

Technological advancements have reshaped leadership development in a variety of ways, from how training is delivered to enabling virtual collaboration and feedback. With these tools, leadership development has become more tailor-friendly, as the leaders can now access training programs mouse click away leaving their schedules busy or turning recordings/screenshots for learning purposes.

Finally, leaders also need to conceive a plan for digital survival in which the purpose of their institutions can flourish. Under this concept an institution is constantly spending resources to remain at the cutting edge of technology, and more importantly setting themselves up for opportunities which are yet to come. Leadership development programmes must nurture this strategic perspective, helping leaders to view how technology might be integrated creatively to advance the institution's mission and goals. It entails creating an innovation-based culture where experimentation and risk-taking are promoted.

Overcoming these obstacles and developing leaders who can operate in a digital environment will go far to ensure that higher-education institutions are equipped for success as the world becomes increasingly interconnected. A higher level of understanding, on the other hand, will enable digital transformation-savvy leaders to innovate better and identify pathways for educational success while ensuring a more equitable learning experience that reaches beyond any limits from where learners find themselves.

Higher education is a dynamic, multi-dimensional environment and the development of leadership skills by everyone who puts on their academic gowns will always be critical to the success and sustainability of an institution. In an era when universities and colleges are confronting a broad array of challenges from globalization, to technology-enabled change, to the increasing clamor for greater diversity and inclusion in our institutions everywhere, there can be no too strong emphasis on leadership.

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