Leading Tomorrow – and what it takes today.

What will leadership and collaboration look like in the world of tomorrow? Which factors influence us? Get involved in a game of the mind.

The requirements…

…are an interest in the topic – i.e. the further development of leadership – and curiosity. Time for reflection and discussion, specifically around 30-45 minutes for preparation and around 90-120 minutes to play the game. No personal leadership experience is necessary since the game is about creating dialogue and integrating different perspectives on the topic.

The game is made up of…

…green cards for leadership tasks, blue cards for influencing factors for leadership and blank cards for both categories so you can add your own ideas. You will need a table, or even just some floor space, that is big enough to play the game on.

All members of the team…

…should participate if possible. The best group size is 5 to 7 people. Beyond that, it's best to split up into smaller groups so that everyone can have their say.

Leadership tasks…

…in this game refer to any tasks that are related to leadership. These are not only carried out by managers, but are often also the responsibility of the whole team.

Influencing factors…

…in this game are trends or independent variables, that impact the company and therefore also teams and leadership. There is a distinction between environmental factors (green drawings), company factors (yellow drawings) and human factors (purple drawings).

Before you play the game…

…print out the game on double-sided paper (Printing Preferences -> 2 sided: Long Edge Bind (Open to Left/Top)) and cut the cards to size. Please make sure that the front and back sides match.

Make a preliminary selection of playing cards (around 30 – 45 minutes time required) by first laying out all the leadership tasks and then selecting 6 – 8 cards that are important for your team. Then do the same thing with the influencing factors on leadership and choose 4 – 6 cards.

Anyone can complete this preliminary card selection, i.e. the current manager, the project leader, the individual responsible for culture, the whole team, etc. Having more people take part in the preliminary selection will take more time, but the initial starting position for the game will be more coordinated.

The leadership tasks you chose…

…should be laid out and ranked by their importance at the beginning of the game (around 20-30 minutes). Designate a timekeeper and one person to read the back of the cards to the group. Discuss which tasks are currently most important for you as a team and how this is reflected. The aim is to put the leadership tasks in order from left to right. The most important tasks should be on the left. Add any leadership tasks that are missing from the game or write them out using the blank cards.

The influencing factors you chose…

…should be laid out and sorted according to their relevance in the second step of the game (around 20-30 minutes). Designate a timekeeper once again, and for the next step of the game as well, and one person to read out the back of the cards to the group. Discuss which topics have the biggest influence on your team and how that is demonstrated. Gain new understanding of the leadership environment by doing so. The aim is to organise the influencing factors so that those with more influence are closer to the leadership tasks and the ones with less influence are further away. Add to the cards laid out any other influencing factors of the game or use the blank cards to write your own.

With a view into the future…

…discuss what impact the influencing factors laid out will have on the relative importance of the leadership

tasks (around 15 minutes). What becomes more important? What becomes less important and why? Consider a time period of about 5 years for this. If the importance of a leadership task increases, move it upwards on the axis. If the leadership task is now less important, move it downwards on the axis. If new leadership tasks become necessary, you can add them from the cards in the game or write them out using the blank cards.

Applying the insights...

...to the present day is the final step (around 15 minutes). Which influencing factors do you want to keep in mind? Which skills and competencies are more in demand? Which issues should be tackled today, with a view to the Leading Tomorrow? Are leadership tasks shared out differently within the team? When would you like to play the game again?

If you split yourselves up into subgroups...

...each group plays by itself. During the last 5-7 minutes of each time period, each subgroup should present their results, but without discussing the results between groups. That way, you can take inspiration from other subgroups and then continue in your own group. Only at the very end do you come together to draw a conclusion.

Overview of the playing cards

Environmental factors of leadership...
...include:
- Societal changes
- Contradictions in the world
- Changing infrastructure
- Unforeseeable changes in circumstances
- Dynamics of the procurement and sales markets
- Sustainability and social responsibility
- Digitalisation and new business models
- Changes in the labour market

Company factors of leadership...
...include:
- Dissolution of corporate boundaries
- Increased rate of change
- Cost sensitivity and uncertain profits
- Contradictory trends within the company
- Diversity of organisational structures
- Diversity of forms of employment
- Making individual contributions visible
- Changing career profiles

Human factors of leadership...
...include:
- Desire to have a secure livelihood
- Balance in the different domains of life
- Flexible working time and location
- Desire for self-fulfilment
- Increasing workload

Leadership tasks...
...include ensuring tasks are fulfilled:
- Clarify objectives and responsibilities
- Ensure a focus on results and customer needs
- Ensure safety and quality
- Keep a good overview
- Make and facilitate decisions
- Identify problems and solve them
- Ensure information is shared
- Have the team's back
- Marketing

...include strengthening team cohesion:
- Encourage team cohesion
- Take care of HR issues

...include ensuring organisational developments:
- Show understanding
- Shape the future
- Encourage entrepreneurship
- Manage changes
- Create a culture of learning
- Develop skills

...include strengthening individuals:
- Perceive employees as individuals
- Strengthen self-management
- Maintain performance

...include taking an active lead as a manager:
- Self-management (as a leader)
- Self-reflection (as a leader)