

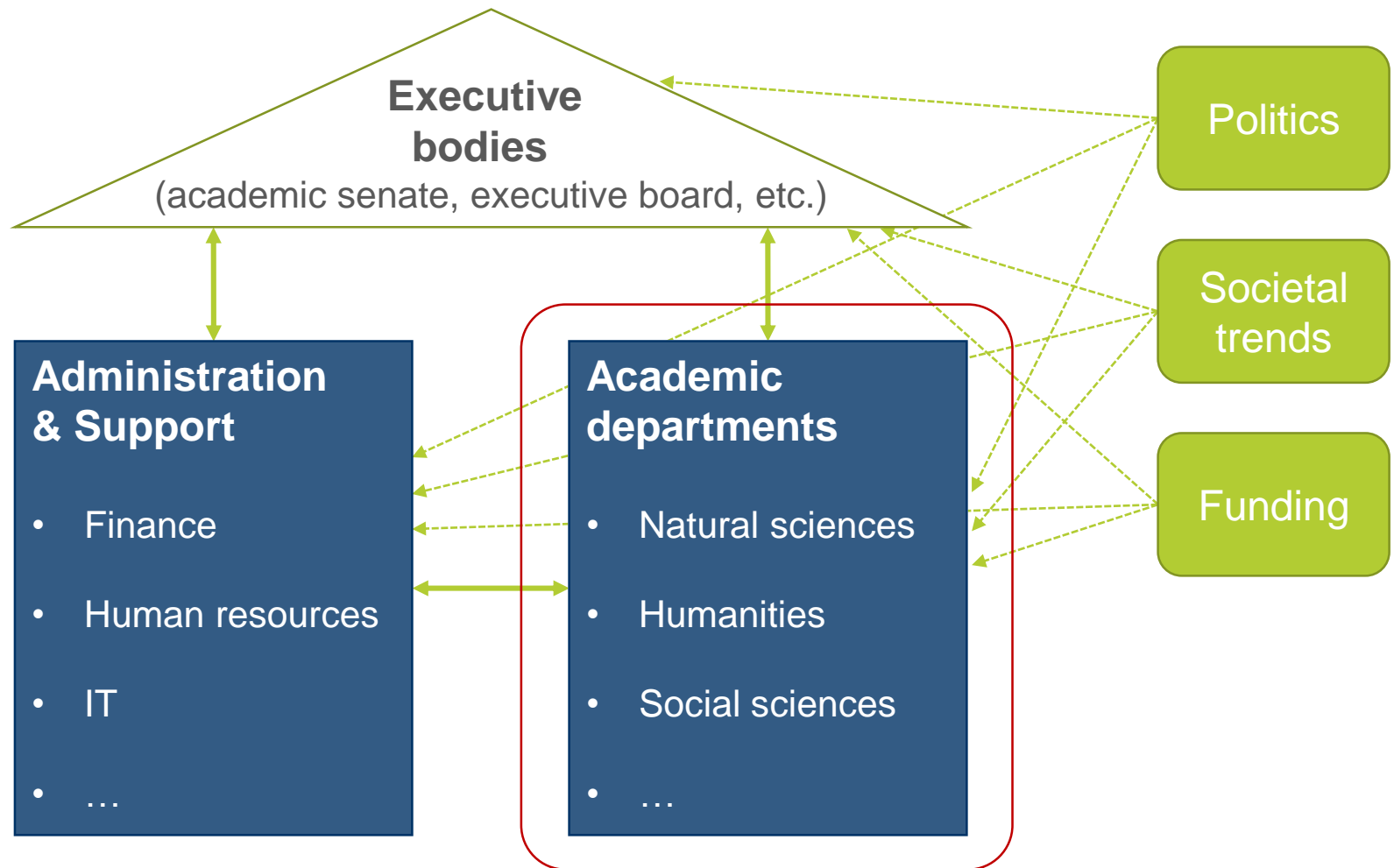
# Leadership at Universities

DAHLEM  
LEADERSHIP  
ACADEMY  
FÜHRUNG FÖRDERN  
WISSEN SCHAFFEN

Thoughts on leadership and leadership development in scientific working contexts and a practical example

Dr. Daniel May  
Division of Social-, Organizational and Economic Psychology

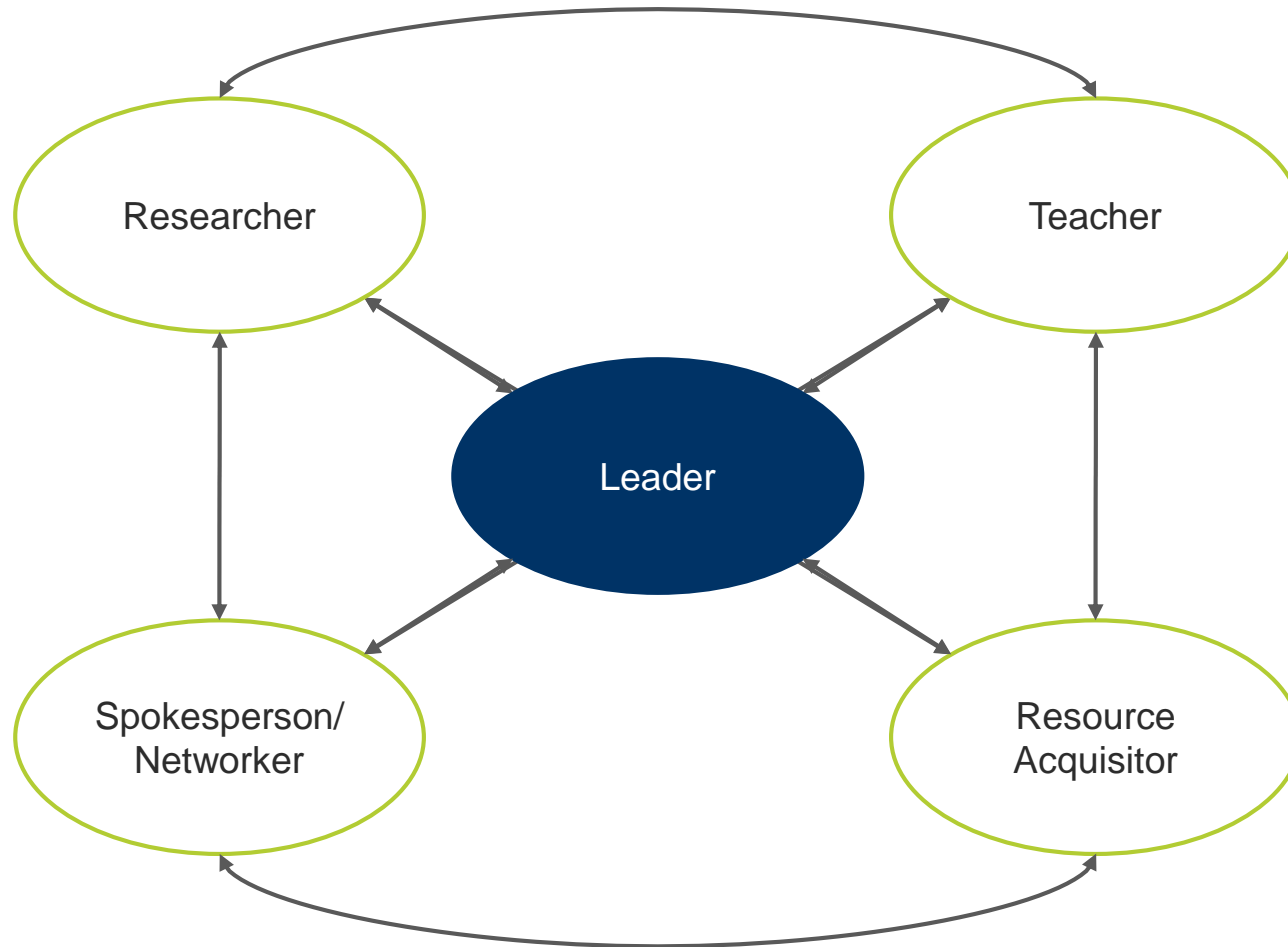
# Universities as complex organisations – challenges for leadership



## Professors...

- hold a unique position within the university system:
  - “line managers” in the larger context of department and university, but
  - mostly independent “CEOs” of their individual research uni
- usually preside over a team of followers:
  - doctoral candidates
  - PostDocs
  - technical and administrative staff
- operate in a highly complex and competitive working environment:
  - Complex university system
  - Scientific community
  - Limited funding opportunities
- **But: do not necessarily perceive themselves to *BE* leaders!**

# The professorial role set



(Macfarlane, 2008, 2011; May et al., 2010; Peus et al., 2008; Schmidt & Richter, 2008)

# Why leadership is critical for scientific excellence

D A H L E M  
LEADERSHIP  
ACADEMY

FÜHRUNG FÖRDERN  
WISSEN SCHAFFEN

# What do we mean by “leadership”?

## Leadership...

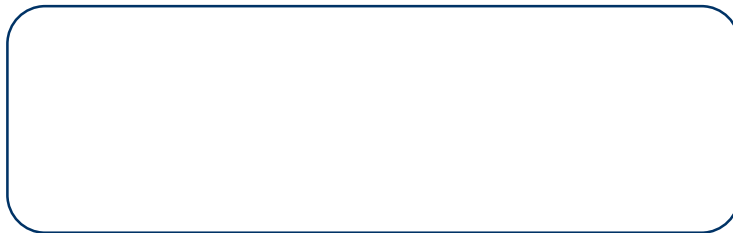
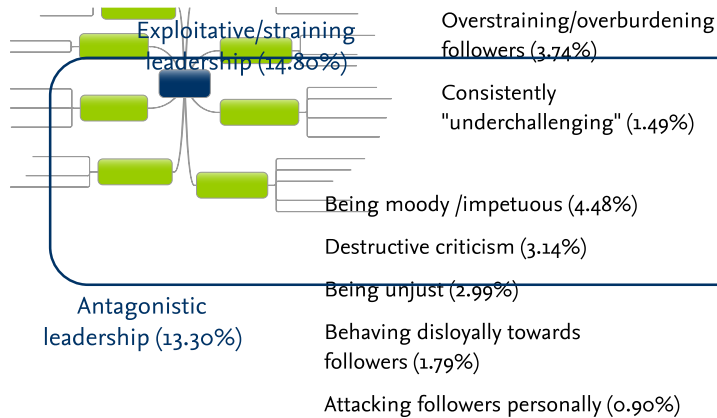
- **is a conscious and goal-directed influence on others.**
- creates a common understanding of what shall be accomplished as well as how it can be done.
- promotes individual and collective efforts towards common goals.

(e.g., Yukl, 2013)

# Why is good leadership important in scientific working contexts?

- **Science is a demanding working environment**
  - Scientific progress is more than ever a collaborative effort
  - Followers hold high expectations with regard to their supervisors

# Major concerns with leadership in scientific contexts – examples from an interview study



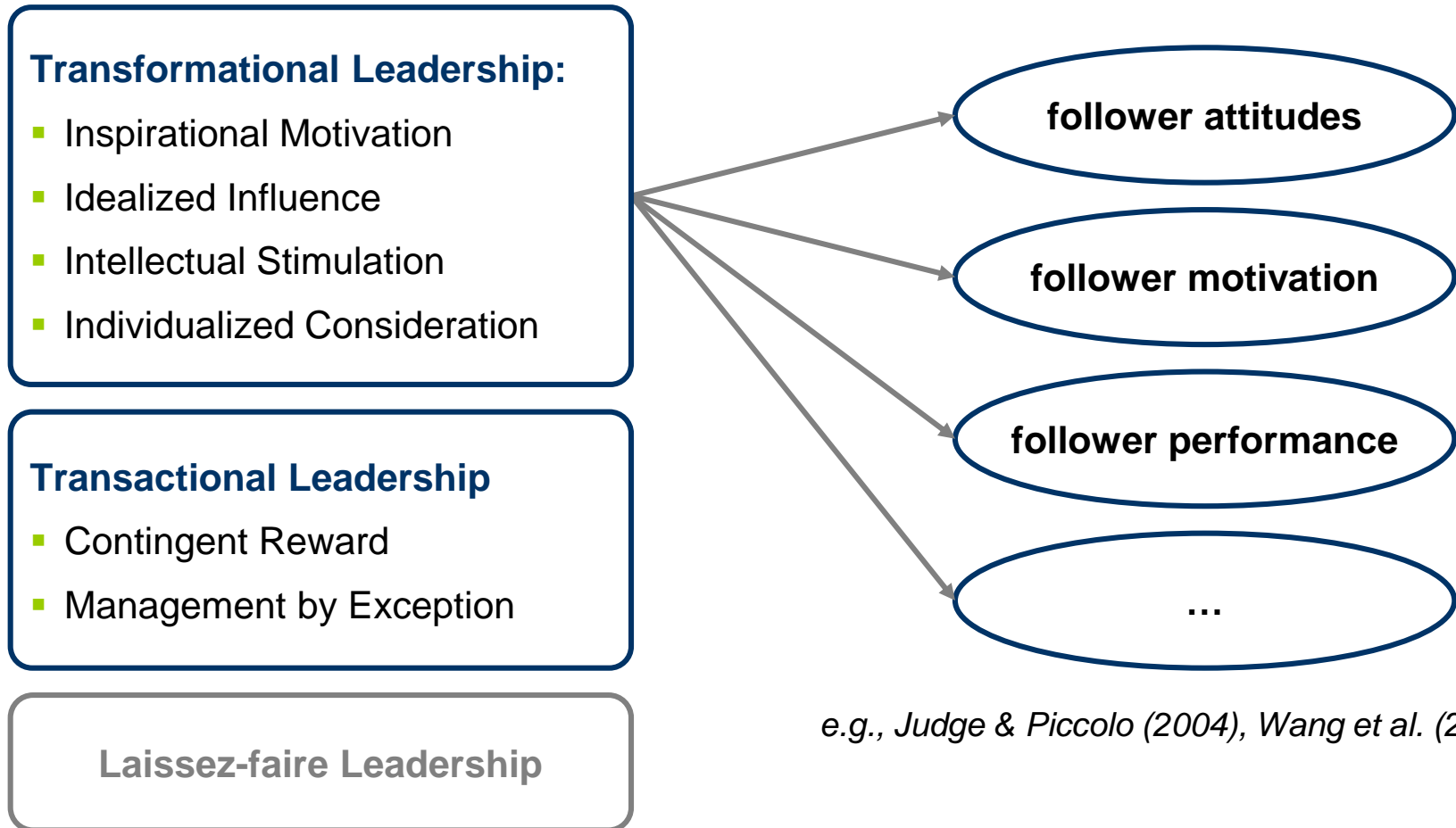
(May et al., 2011)



# Why is good leadership important in scientific working contexts?

- **Science is a demanding working environment**
  - Scientific progress is more than ever a collaborative effort
  - Followers hold high expectations with regard to their supervisors
- **Leadership research indicates that leadership “works”**
  - Leadership is a central predictor of follower wellbeing and productivity
  - Initial evidence suggests that this is also true for scientific working environment

# An example of effective leadership: The Full Range Model (Bass, 1985)



*e.g., Judge & Piccolo (2004), Wang et al. (2011)*

# Effectiveness of Transformational Leadership in scientific environments

- Department chairs' transformational leadership predicts faculty members' satisfaction with supervision, perceived organizational effectiveness and willingness to extend extra effort (Brown & Moshavi, 2002)
- R&D-team leaders' transformational leadership predicts the teams' work performance in terms of technical quality, cost and schedule performance (Keller, 2006)
- Professors' transformational leadership was positively related to followers' work satisfaction and team performance in terms of peer-reviewed publications (Braun et al., 2013)

# Why is good leadership important in scientific working contexts?

- **Science is a demanding working environment**
  - Scientific progress is more than ever a collaborative effort
  - Followers hold high expectations with regard to their supervisors
- **Leadership research indicates that leadership “works”**
  - Leadership is a central predictor of follower wellbeing and productivity
  - Initial evidence suggests that this is also true for scientific working environments
- **But: “Good” leadership is rarely promoted in scientific environments**
  - Scientific leaders are usually ill-prepared for the leadership role
  - German universities have begun to invest in leadership development for scientific leaders only relatively recently (approx. 10 years)

# Dahlem Leadership Academy at Freie Universität Berlin

D A H L E M  
LEADERSHIP  
ACADEMY

FÜHRUNG FÖRDERN  
WISSEN SCHAFFEN

Leadership development for full professors

## ➔ **Our principle**

- A program from science for science

## ➔ **Our goal**

- Promoting successful collaboration between professors and their teams through leadership knowledge and skills

## ➔ **Our guideline**

- Leadership principles of Freie Universität Berlin

# The Leadership Principles of Freie Universität Berlin



leaders are role models



leaders take responsibility



leaders convince others



leaders provide room for maneuver



leaders encourage a transparent flow of information



leaders motivate through goals



leaders encourage a transparent flow of information



leaders show appreciation



leaders act fairly



leaders listen



leaders open up avenues for development

# Our training philosophy

modular workshop  
content



compact  
workshops



evidence-based  
methods



free choice of  
curriculum



small workshop  
groups



continuous  
evaluation





# Core development topics of DLA



## Supporting topics

- Time and project management
- Personnel selection
- Work-life-balance
- ...

## Structure & quantity

- Combination of introductory and follow-up workshops
- 6-8 workshops per semester
- 1-2 special events per year (e.g., panel discussions on current topics)

Further development of program through constant feedback from our target audience

# Questions? Questions!

DAHLEM  
LEADERSHIP  
ACADEMY

FÜHRUNG FÖRDERN  
WISSEN SCHAFFEN



# References

- Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York: Free Press.
- Braun, S., Peus, C., Weisweiler, S., & Frey, D. (2013). Transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and team performance: A multilevel mediation model of trust. *The Leadership Quarterly, 24*, 270–283.
- Brown, F. W., & Moshavi, D. (2002). Herding academic cats: Faculty reactions to transformational and contingent reward leadership by department chairs. *Journal of Leadership Studies, 8*, 79–93.
- Judge, T. A. & Piccolo, R. F. (2004). Transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analytic test of their relative validity. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 89*, 755-768.
- Keller, R. T. (2006). Transformational leadership, initiating structure, and substitutes for leadership: a longitudinal study of research and development project team performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 91*, 202–210.
- Macfarlane, B. (2008, 09-11 December 2008). *Re-valuing professorial leadership: Understanding what professors do and how universities can make the most from their trans-disciplinary skills*. Paper presented at the Society for Research into Higher Education Annual Conference, Liverpool, England.
- Macfarlane, B. (2011). Professors as intellectual leaders: formation, identity and role. *Studies in Higher Education, 36*, 57-73.
- May, D., Peus, C., Dünzl, M., & Frey, D. (2011). *Negative Führung im Wissenschaftskontext – Formen, Ursachen, Auswirkungen [Negative leadership in academia - forms, antecedents, consequences]* Presentation at the 7. Tagung der Fachgruppe Arbeits-, Organisations- und Wirtschaftspsychologie der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychologie, Rostock, Germany.
- May, D., Weisweiler, S., Peus, C., & Frey, D. (2010). *Führungsstile und Führungsrollen wissenschaftlicher Führungskräfte [Leadership styles and roles of leaders in science]*. Presentation at the 47. Kongress der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychologie, Bremen, Germany.
- Peus, C., Weisweiler, S., & Pawlowska, B. (2008). *Customizing faculty development: Faculty members' roles and skills*. Paper presented at the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Conference: Preparing for Academic Practice, Oxford, England.
- Schmidt, B., & Richter, A. (2008). Unterstützender Mentor oder abwesender Aufgabenverteiler? - Eine qualitative Interviewstudie zum Führungshandeln von Professorinnen und Professoren aus der Sicht von Promovierenden [Supporting mentor or absent task allocator? A qualitative interview study on the leadership of professors as seen by PhD students]. *Beiträge zur Hochschulforschung, 4*, 34-59.
- Wang, G., Oh, I.-S., Courtright, S. H., & Colbert, A. E. 2011. Transformational leadership and performance across criteria and levels: A meta-analytic review of 25 years of research. *Group & Organization Management, 36*, 223-270
- Yukl, G. (2013). *Leadership in Organizations* (8th ed.). Harlow: Pearson

## Daniel May

Dahlem Leadership Academy (DLA)

Freie Universität Berlin

Habelschwerdter Allee 45

Raum JK 27/222e

14195 Berlin

Tel.: +49 (0)30 838 59367

E-Mail: [dla@fu-berlin.de](mailto:dla@fu-berlin.de)

[www.fu-berlin.de/dla](http://www.fu-berlin.de/dla)