

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

THE ART OF FACILITATION: WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A LEADER

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What are your main roles as Dean?

Before I started my current position (as the dean) at the university, I had some administrative responsibilities. I was the vice-dean between 2014 and 2017. Still, before this, I served as assistant to the department chair. I was familiar with administrative tasks, but I never forgot my academic identity. So, for me, the job was an administrative, as well as an academic one. Now for almost one year, I have been the Dean of the Graduate School of Social Science. In the past, I had ideas and goals on how to manage an academic unit, however, I could not realize them because I did not have the authority to realize these goals or to put these ideas in practice. Right now, I have the authority. I am in the key decision-making position at the graduate school (to realize the goals and ideas). In my current position, I have several different responsibilities regarding academic issues, personnel issues, financial issues, administrative issues, and the day to day functions at the graduate school.

What are the three most satisfactory things about your current role?

I think facilitating certain functions and helping the faculty or departments address their issues and contribute to their academic performance, as a result of this facilitation give me a lot of satisfaction. For example, making the department progress, like getting a good project, contribute to the promotion of the faculty, or realizing academic progress as a result of my facilitation [..]. This is the most satisfying part of my current role. I never see myself as more than a facilitator, because I cannot, and I do not want to, make decisions for my faculty members, for my departments. My understanding of academic freedom does not let me hold the entire authority in performing the academic tasks. I simply don't see myself smarter than my faculty members and departments when it comes to academic issues of the departments.

But of course, I am expecting them to persuade me, to convince me, regarding their demands. So, we have a discussion, and they have to convince me, and then I try to serve them. In this way, we accomplish something together. This is very satisfactory. For instance, we have initiated a discussion on the format of the Ph.D. dissertation at our graduate school. When it comes to academic practices and structures, we are very conservative. Even having this discussion is an accomplishment in itself. This is a strategic issue and being involved in such strategic issues rather than the daily routines is satisfactory.

I will serve in my current position for 3 years, and then I have to leave there with some accomplishments. When I work towards the accomplishments, of course I feel satisfied. However, if I feel that I am not progressing in my vision, then of course I will not feel satisfied. Also, when I feel that I am overloaded with daily routines, then I feel frustrated. I don't like to be involved in routines. But from time to time, especially at the beginning and end of the semesters, we have to deal with these routines.



Another frustrating part of this job, in Turkey at least, is that I have to mediate not only between departments and top management, but also between departments and the outside world. Also, in Turkey, because of the centralized system, you have to accommodate certain directives originating from the top, for example the Higher Education Council. And then, I have to convince the faculty about things that I am personally not convinced about. This is something that bothers me about my role as dean. For instance, when rules or regulations are changed, the faculty resists. I have to explain why we have to do this, when in fact I don't believe in it myself. It's a kind of a conflict of identity for me.

Describe the biggest change you've dealt with since you've become a Dean? How did you adapt?

I haven't achieved it yet, but my vision is to redefine the format of the Ph.D. dissertations in my unit. We are currently working on it, and I hope we will be able to accomplish it. But, as I mentioned, when it comes to the academic structure and functions, METU is a very conservative place. Therefore, accomplishing this will be a major transformation, not just a change.

We want to change the format of the Ph.D. dissertation. But we should keep in mind that in Turkey middle-level management does not have much authority, legally speaking. Hence, with this limited authority, all we can do is adjust certain academic structures. This is a highly political process at the same time. We have to negotiate with different people from different disciplines, and believe me, every discipline or department, has a totally different culture. You have to propose one thing in different ways, to different people to make them accept it, and to keep their support. This is a challenge, but a sweet challenge, I must say.

Describe a time when you demonstrated effective leadership skills?

Effective leadership skills can be demonstrated in times of conflict. For example, in times of conflict between the top and lower levels, or between two units, or two people. One thing that doesn't work in academia and, which I don't use at all, is position of power. I never try to act as a dean with my bureaucratic role or position. I always speak or use my expert power, and I speak to a collegial environment, not a bureaucratic one.

When I meditate, or resolve conflicts, or convince people of an idea I use my leadership skills. When you have a vision, you need to align the vision with the key goal and convince people to forget about their conflicts and work towards the common goals. This is what we call leadership. The rest is all management.

In Turkey, we have one problem. Unfortunately, since people do not have training in academic leadership and management, as soon as they get the position, they try to rule through their position of power. And they get a strong reaction because academia is not a place where you can rule with this type of power.



Describe your leadership style?

I am a facilitator. Of course, I listen to top management, but top management has certain goals. I try to mediate between the top and lower levels in order to contribute to the university's vision. I do not see myself more than a facilitator. Going back to the vision of the new Ph.D. I have to do it with the collaboration of the faculty. I cannot push for this, and I cannot punish people who don't agree with me. It is my responsibility, as a leader, to convince them. Then as I said, I need to facilitate their academic practices. While I am doing this, I always encourage them to take an innovative stance.

I like to progress, I don't want to preserve the things as they are right now, because everything changes in the outside world. I want my faculty to consider the international aspects of their practices. I of course, encourage this kind of understanding, but the final decision belongs to the faculty members. It's their decision, I'm only a facilitator.

"I never see myself as more than a facilitator, because I cannot, and I do not want to, make decisions for my faculty members"

What types of decisions are the most difficult for you to make? Why?

Decisions regarding conflicts between faculty members are usually unpleasant ones for me. Sometimes they sound very simple, but they are important, and you have to take them seriously. Sometimes I am stuck in between because the cases push me to act against what I believe about management and/or leadership. Sometimes, and I have never done this, you can act bureaucratically, and handle academic issues with court procedures or legal procedures. This is very challenging, and I refuse to do this. It's my style, my role, and my responsibility, and I never hesitate to use my authority in a facilitating way.

How did you sell a new idea to your management team, and what was the result?

The strongest body in our administration is the academic board, where we have all the heads of the departments. First, I always get myself informed about the issues and typically, when we discuss things, I collect information. Then I raise the issue in front of the department heads, and I ask the simple question- "What do you think?" Then it works by itself as a chemical reaction. They start to discuss amongst themselves. Of course, in some cases you cannot resolve it in a single session.

I cannot tell you that everything is homogeneous, smooth, or straightforward. For example, they will never reach a total agreement, but we usually have a good majority. It's not 51%, but a good 70-80%. When you ask people to discuss issues, it works. But you have to give it time. For major issues, you have to give sufficient time.

Another point is that you have to have a good command of your organization.

You have to be very familiar with your archives for example, previous decisions, your student profile, faculty profile, etc. This is a very important aspect of leadership. You cannot start leading a new organization by erasing the history of your unit. It is there, and you have to build on it. If it's good, build on it and progress, and if it's bad, try to redefine or change it.

How do you keep your team focused?

I involve them. On my team, I have two vice-deans and one advisor. The advisor's role is very clear and concrete. For the others, I have a distribution of tasks. The department heads are independent in their functions, but from time to time, I need certain minor things from them. I always allocate tasks, and of course, I always want to get their perspective. Because by doing so, minimize the risk of making mistakes. Our faculty is very heterogeneous. I have advisors and assistants from different disciplines. They bring their own perspective. This is also very important for eliminating the risk of making mistakes.

In which areas would you like to further develop yourself?

In short, making evidence-based decisions is very critical, for example, when you want to change certain things. (...) So having a good command of your data, archives, background, is very important. In order to understand the data, you need more time. (...) Enhancing ourselves in this area will be very critical.

How does the LEAD2 project help you to enhance your leadership skills?

I have met good leaders, strong leaders in the LEAD2 project meetings, workshops, and through the network itself. Talking to these people is in itself instructive. Of course, you also see different leadership practices from different institutions, which inspires you to think and see the issues you are confronting in your organization differently. It broadens your horizons.

For example, the LEAD2 project provides possibilities for international collaboration to widen academic practice. For example, whenever we need an international collaboration, I always refer to the LEAD2 project or the connections that I built through it. Don't forget the LEAD2 experience by itself, even without attending academic activities or workshops, is very informative. It's because you meet and collaborate with different leadership figures, and you learn from one another.

What's your view on what makes for effective leadership training and development?

I think effective leadership training and development should be two dimensional. First, you must bring good cases. The conversation and collaboration are in themselves informative for leaders, but I never underestimate the importance of formal training. In my experience, if you are not trained in management, especially organizational behavior, then you try to rule with bureaucratic power. And this doesn't work at a university. You must develop other skills, and realizing this only comes from training. In that sense, the workshops, keynote speeches, and MOOCs are always informative and instructive for current and prospective academic leaders.

焦点

引领推动： 学术领导者的方向

Yasar Kondakci教授是土耳其安卡拉中东科技大学（METU）社会科学研究生院院长。他是METU教育管理和规划专业的教授。他在比利时根特大学管理和组织领域获得博士学位。他的主要研究领域是高等教育，教育变革和教育社会平等。

您担任院长的主要角色是什么？

在我开始担任大学现任职务（担任院长）之前，已经承担了一些行政职责。我曾在2014年至2017年担任副院长。在此之前，我曾担任系主任助理。我熟悉学院的行政管理任务。但是我永远不会忘记我的学术身份。所以对我来说，这份工作既是行政工作，也是学术工作。现在差不多一年了，我一直担任社会科学学院院长。过去，我对如何管理学术单位有想法和目标。但是，我无法实现它们，因为我无权实现这些目标或将这些思想付诸实践。现在，我在学院中担任关键决策职位（以实现目标和构想），我现在可以有权实现一些目标。在目前的职位上，我在学术问题，人事问题，财务问题，行政问题以及学院的日常管理职能方面负有几项不同的职责。

您目前的职位最令您满意的三件事是什么？

我认为，通过促进某些职能并帮助院系解决他们的问题并为他们的学术表现做出贡献，这使我感到非常满意。例如，通过引领推动工作，使部门取得进展，例如获得一个好的项目，为推动学院教师的晋升做出贡献，或实现学术方面的进展……这是我目前工作中最令人满意的部分。我认为自己主要是一个引领推动的角色，因为我不能也不想替我的学院教师和院系各系做决定。我对学术自由的理解并不能使我拥有执行学术任务的全部权力。在各系的学术问题上，我觉得自己不能比我的院系同事更聪明。

但是，当然，我希望他们能说服我，使我信服他们的要求。因此，我们进行讨论，他们必须说服我，然后我才能更好地为他们服务。这样，我们可以共同完成某件事。这是非常令人满意的。

例如，我们已经开始在我们的学院对于博士论文形式的改革进行讨论。说到学术实践和结构，我们还是非常保守的。即使对这个议题进行此讨论本身也是一项成就。这是一个战略问题，令人满意的是大家都积极参与讨论此类战略性的议题而不只是例行公事。

我将在现任职位上任职三年，之后我必须带着一些成就离开这个职位。当我为取得的成就而努力时，我会感到满足。但是，如果我觉得自己的愿景没有进步，那么我当然不会感到满意。另外，当我觉得自己每天的工作量过多时，我也会感到沮丧。我不喜欢只是参加常规事务性工作。但是有时，尤其是在学期的开始和结束时，我们必须处理这些常规事务性工作。

至少在土耳其，这项工作的另一个令人沮丧的职责是，我不仅必须在部门与高层管理人员之间进行调解，而且还必须在部门与其他外部机构之间进行调解。同样，在土耳其，由于采用了集中式系统，因此我们必须适应某些源自高层的指令，例如高等教育委员会的指令。然后，我必须说服学院的教师梦实施一些我个人并不完全相信的事情。这让我对担任院长的角色感到困扰。例如，当规则或法规发生变化时，教师们会进行抵制。我必须解释为什么我们必须这样做，而实际上我本人并不相信。对我来说，这是一种身份冲突。



请描述您成为院长以来最大的变化，您是如何适应的？

我还没实现，但是我的愿景是重新定义社会科学研究生院博士论文的形式。我们目前正在研究这个议题，我希望我们能够完成这一目标。但是，正如我提到的，在学术结构和职能方面，METU是一个非常保守的大学。因此，实现这一目标将是一个重大转型，而不仅仅是改变。

我们想要改革博士论文的形式。但是我们应该记住，从法律上讲，在土耳其，中层管理人员没有太多的授权。因此，在这种有限的权力下，我们所能做的就是调整某些学术结构。同时，这是一个高度政治化的过程。我们必须与不同学科的人进行商榷，而且请相信，每个学科或系都有其完全不同的文化。您必须以不同的方式向不同的人提出一件事，以便他们接受并得到他们的支持。我必须说，这是一个挑战，但也是一个亲切有意义的挑战。



“我从不认为自己的作用大于一个推动者，因为我不能而且也不想代替我的院系成员独自做决定”

请描述您展示有效领导能力的一个时机？

有效的领导技巧可以在冲突时期得到证明，例如，在最高层和较低层之间，或者两个单位或两个人之间的冲突的时候。在学术界不起作用，并且我根本不使用的一件事是职位的权力。我从不试图以我的职位角色或院长身份来行使院长的职责，我一直通过我的专家角色和权利讲话，并且我是在大学学术共治环境而不是官僚环境中讲话。

当我冥想、或解决冲突、或力图使人们相信某个观念时，我会使用自己的领导才能。当你拥有愿景时，你需要将愿景与关键目标保持一致，并说服人们忘记他们的冲突，并朝着共同目标努力。这就是我们所说的领导力。余下的工作都是管理。

在土耳其，我们有一个难题。很不幸，由于学术管理人员没有接受过学术领导和管理方面的培训，因此，一旦获得职位，他们就会试图通过职位的权力来进行管理。但他们将会得到比较强烈的反应，因为学术界不是一个可以使用这种职位权力来治理的地方。

请描述您的领导风格？

我是一个引领推动者。当然，我听从高层管理人员的意见，而且高层管理人员有某些明确的目标。我尝试在高层和下级之间进行斡旋，以促成大学的愿景目标。我认为自己不过是个引领推动者。回到关于新的博士论文形式改革的愿景，我必须在与教师们的协作下做到这一点。我不能强迫执行，也不能惩罚和我意见不同的人。作为领导者，我有责任说服他们。然后，正如我所说，我需要促进他们的学术实践。在这样做的同时，我始终也要鼓励他们有创新的视角。

我喜欢推动进展，不愿只保持现状停滞不前，因为外面世界的一切都在变化。我希望学院的教职人员在学术实践中考虑国际的视野。当然我鼓励他们这样做，但最终决定权属于学院的教师们。这是他们的决定，我只是个引领推动者。

您最难做出哪些类型的决定？为什么？

对于我来说，关于学院教师之间冲突的决定通常是令人不快的。有时候这些问题听起来很简单，但也很重要，你必须认真对待它们。有时我会陷入两难境地，因为这些事迫使使我违背我对管理和/或领导力的信念。有时候你可以采取官僚作风，用法庭程序或法律程序处理学术问题，但我从来没有这样做过。这很有挑战性，我拒绝这样做。这是我的风格，我的角色，我的责任，我毫不犹豫地以推动者的方式来进行我的职责。您是如何向管理层推出新想法的，结果是什么？

我们的管理职能中最强大的机构是学术委员会，因为所有的系主任都是学术委员会的成员。首先，我总是要让自己了解问题，通常，当我们讨论事物时，我会收集信息。然后我在与系主任们会谈时提出这个问题，然后问他们一个简单的问题：“你们怎么看？”然后事情就像起化学反应那样起作用了。系主任们相互之间开始讨论。当然，在某些情况下，我们无法只通过一次会谈就解决问题。

我不能说一切都是顺畅或直截了当的。例如，系主任们永远不会达成完全的协议，但我们通常拥有绝大多数，不是51%，而是70-80%。当你提出要求大家讨论问题时，这个方法是有用的。但是你必须给它时间。对于重大问题，你必须给足够的时间。

另一点是，你必须对你的组织机构有很好的了解。例如，你必须非常熟悉你的学院的背景资料，比如说以前的决策，学生的资料，教师的背景资料等。这是领导力的一个非常重要的方面。你无法通过抹去一个机构的历史来开始领导一个新的组织。因为那些背景就在那里，你必须在此基础上再接再厉。如果它是好的，就在它的基础上继续前进，如果它是坏的，就试着重新定义或进行修改。

您如何让您的团队保持专注？

我让他们参与进来。在我的团队里，我有两个副院长和一个顾问。顾问的作用非常具体明确。对于其他成员，我有一个明确的任务分配。系主任的职能是独立的，但有时我需要他们做些小的事情。我总是会分配任务，当然，我总是想了解他们的观点。因为这样做，可以把失误的风险降到最低。我们的师资力量非常多样化，我们有来自不同学科的顾问和助手，他们有自己的观点。这对消除失误的风险也非常重要。

您想在哪些领域进一步发展自己？

简言之，当你想改变某些事情时，做出基于实证分析的决策是非常关键的。（...）因此，掌握好你的实证数据、资料、背景等非常重要。为了理解实证数据，你需要更多的时间。（...）在这方面提升我们的能力至关重要。

LEAD2项目如何帮助您提高领导技能？

我在LEAD2项目会议、研讨会和合作平台中结识了优秀的、强有力的领导者们。与这些人交谈本身就是很有启发性的。当然，我们也可以了解到来自不同机构的不同领导力实践，这会激励你以不同的方式思考和看待组织中所面临的问题，这些交流开阔了我们的视野。例如，LEAD2项目提供了进行国际合作以扩大学术实践的可能性。例如，每当我们需要国际合作时，我总是提到LEAD2项目或我通过LEAD2建立的联络。即使不参加学术活动或研讨会，也不要忘记自己拥有LEAD2的经历，这将为我们将带来很多信息。这是因为你能在这个平台与不同的领导人会谈和合作，并且相互学习。

您如何看待有效的领导力培训和发展？

我认为有效的领导力培训和发展应该是二维的。首先，你必须有好案例。对话和协作本身对领导者是有益的，但我从不低估正式培训的重要性。以我的经验，如果你未接受过管理方面的培训，尤其是组织行为方面的培训，那么你会尝试用官僚权力来治理，这在大学里是行不通的。你必须发展其他技能，并且意识到这只能来自培训和学习。从这个意义上讲，研讨会、主题演讲和慕课对于当前和未来的学术领导者来说总是很有启发性和指导意义的。