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## Exploring the Personal Mastery of Educational Leaders: FieldTransFormation<sup>360</sup> and its Validation in the Austrian Leadership Academy

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☞ This paper introduces the innovative model FieldTransFormation<sup>360</sup> and its aim to help educational leaders in assessing their personal mastery. Moreover, it presents empirical findings from its first exploratory application in an Austrian leadership framework. In a first conceptual part, the theoretical underpinnings and the context of the origin of the model are outlined with reference to similar approaches in the area of school leadership. In the following part, the application of the model is introduced through the explanation of the methodology and how the model is turned into a self-assessment instrument. Insights into the results of its exploratory application in the Austrian Leadership Academy are presented in the empirical part. Its first application serves as the consolidation and validation of FieldTransFormation<sup>360</sup> as a meaningful self-assessment tool for the professional development of school leaders. The results of the exploratory approach with participants in the Austrian Leadership Academy suggest that the model and its instrument can be regarded as a robust assessment tool for the development of a deeper understanding about the transformative power through personal and professional development in the lived experience of educational leadership.

**Keywords:** educational leadership, transformative learning, school leaders, personal mastery, Austrian Leadership Academy

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## Preučevanje osebnih spretnosti vodij šol: FieldTransFormation<sup>360</sup> in njegova veljavnost na Avstrijski akademiji za vodenje

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☞ Prispevek predstavlja inovativni model FieldTransFormation<sup>360</sup> in njegov namen pomagati vodjem šol pri oceni njihovih osebnih spretnosti. Poleg tega predstavlja empirične izsledke njegove prve uporabe v okviru vodenja v Avstriji. V prvem, konceptualnem delu so predstavljeni teoretična izhodišča in kontekst izvora modela s sklicevanjem na podobne pristope znotraj področja vodenja šol. V naslednjem delu je predstavljena aplikacija modela z razlago metodologije in tega, kako je model postal instrument za samoocenjevanje. V empiričnem delu prispevka so predstavljeni rezultati njegove uporabe na Avstrijski akademiji za vodenje. Njegova prva uporaba služi kot utrditev in potrditev modela FieldTransFormation<sup>360</sup> kot pomembnega orodja za samoocenjevanje profesionalnega razvoja vodij šol. Izsledki raziskave kažejo, da je lahko model in njegov instrument močno orodje za ocenjevanje razvoja globalnega razumevanja moči spreminjanja prek osebnega in profesionalnega razvoja v dejanskih izkušnjah vodenja v izobraževanju.

**Ključne besede:** vodenje šol, učenje spreminjanja, vodje šol, osebne spretnosti, Avstrijska akademija za vodenje

## Introduction

Aspirations for educational systems and what schools can accomplish seem to be moving apart (Bryk, 2015, p. 467). Conventional reforms of teacher education have led to new reform models and restructured programmes, but they could not keep up with the challenges, which seem to increase at a much faster rate. That is why transactional approaches and Research-Development-Dissemination (RDD) models often do not keep up with social transformation in everyday contexts. As a consequence, so-called transformative models have been introduced, which are closely linked to the concept of learning organisations. In such an understanding, both teacher learning and the learning of educational leaders can be seen as transformative processes, which means that interventions affect how they think and act in everyday work.

Leadership also has a crucial role in forming, developing and designing organisational culture, which has a strong influence on the quality of organisational learning (Senge, 1990) due to the dynamic relationship between the characteristics of organisational learning and the leadership capacity within an organisation (Senge, 2006). Consequently, in the education system, school leadership can influence teachers with regards to their values (Sergiovanni, 1992), their approach to learning (Townsend & MacBeath, 2011) and, last but not least, leadership can be essential to improve the efficiency and equity of schooling (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008, p. 2). Moreover, Gurr (2015, p. 145) specifically stresses

the importance of the school context and how school leaders actively influence this through developing a shared vision and mission and a positive culture, having appropriate structures, people and processes in the school, the active engagement of stakeholders within and outside the school, and the promotion of high expectations for all.

Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999) argue that indeed a culture of empowering and support by the leadership team make their staff believe that a (positive) transformation's key element is constituted, which makes a difference in the classroom. Meanwhile, countless studies and reports have been published on the 'pivotal role of school leadership' (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008, p. 19) and the 'increasing evidence that within each individual school, school leaders can contribute to improved student learning by shaping the conditions and climate in which teaching and learning occur' (ibid.). Educational leaders as 'system thinkers in action' (Fullan, 2005) can help to shape the educational system of tomorrow – these are

[...] leaders at all levels of the system who proactively and naturally take into account and interact with larger parts of the system as they bring about deeper reform and help produce other leaders working on the same issues. They are theoreticians, but they are practitioners whose theories are lived in action every day. Their ideas are woven into daily interactions that make a difference. (ibid., p. 11).

However, it proves to be essential that school leaders are also able, willing, and ready to take upon their leadership with an emphasis on its transformative power (Scharmer, 2009) as ‘transformative teachers are leveraging twenty-first-century connected technologies and participatory practices to take leadership roles in improving education from the ground [up]’ (Baker-Doyle, 2017, p. 4). Furthermore, transformative teachers bear the possibility of creating a path for transformative teacher leadership (Schultz, 2017) to change their profession in order to develop a greater responsibility of teachers for and towards social justice and equity in education (Baker-Doyle, 2017).

This paper aims to introduce the innovative model FieldTransformation<sup>360</sup> to explore the personal mastery of educational leaders and to present the first empirical findings from its exploratory application in an Austrian leadership context. In a first step, selected leadership-based self-assessment models are presented before the application of FieldTransformation<sup>360</sup> is contextualised and the methodological approach is introduced. Hereafter, the results and findings of this exploratory research are presented before the final remarks conclude the article.

## **Leadership based self-assessment models**

Different approaches have been developed to assess leadership competences from different theoretical and practical perspectives. Two of them are presented here to exemplarily illustrate possible and different ways of how to, on the one hand, explore human behaviour generally within a holistic framework and, on the other hand, how to assess the relevant competences of school management more specifically. Both models aim to self-assess the competences of educational leadership. School leaders or other personnel are invited to reflect on their respective answers and learn from the findings with a view to improving those competences accordingly.

The *Role Diagrammatic Approach (RDA)*, shown in Figure 1, serves as ‘an established tool for identifying and characterizing human behavior’ (Baráth, 2013, p. 219) as it ‘is suited to measure the behaviour at different levels and that

gives information about where possible development is needed' (ibid.). Furthermore, value-based models like the RDA help 'to define recommendations, since a person is only willing to make efforts to change his/her behaviour if s/he feels it is important, in whatever s/he deems valuable' (Baráth, 2013, p. 220) assuming that '[v]alues serve as the driving force for the behaviour of individuals. They function whether you are consciously aware of them or not' (ibid.). As an example, models able to plot certain values can be applied to 'compare a job profile [...] with a personal profile' (Baráth, 2013, p. 225).

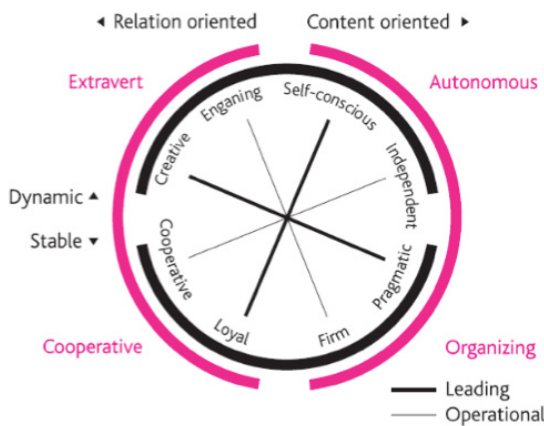


Figure 1. Role Diagrammatic Approach. From *The art and science of leading a school – Central5: A central European view on competences for school leaders* (p. 222), by M. Schratz, A. Laiminger, F. MacKay, E. Křížková, G. A. Kirkham, T. Baráth, G. ... T. Söderberg, 2013, Budapest: Tempus Public Foundation.

The RDA is interpreted by its author as an integral model which includes more than 30,000 words and expressions to characterise the different kinds of behaviour from a 'holistic view of mankind' and 'does not only pay attention to effective behaviour but also to ineffective behaviour' (Baráth, 2010, p. 37). The data that individuals can generate through self-assessment should support leaders in their personal and professional development.

The *Competence Profile School Management (CPSM)* model by Huber, Wolfram, and Kilic (2013) describes competencies based on job requirements on various levels of educational leadership or for various functions, from teachers to team leaders to school leaders who are in charge of the school in its entirety as well as the school administration. Similarly to the RDA approach, this self-assessment tool offers leaders personal feedback, enabling them to

reflect on their leadership qualities by identifying their strengths and weaknesses in general and activity-based competencies, shown in Figure 2. The model is based on leadership strategies, which are known as leadership by adjectives.

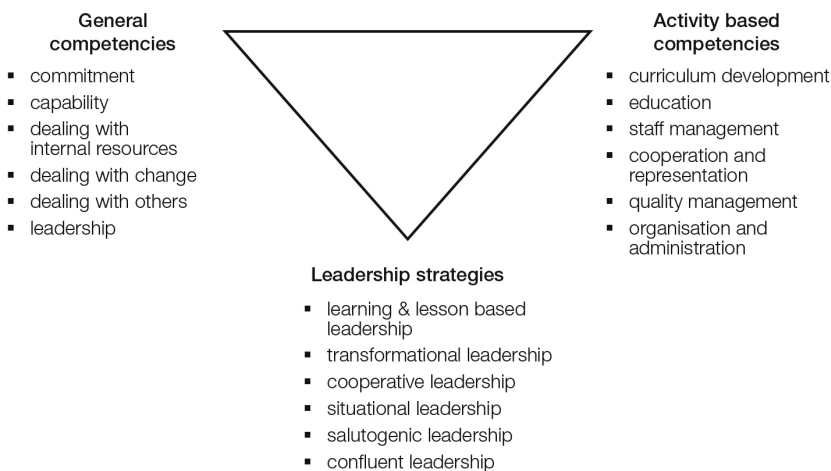


Figure 2. Competence Profile School Management (CPSM) model. From “School leadership in German speaking countries with an emphasis on Austria: A re-vision” by C. Wiesner, A. George, D. Kemethofer, & M. Schratz, 2015, *Ricercazione*, 7(2), p. 82, on the basis of “Jahrbuch Schulleitung 2013”, by S. G. Huber, C. Wolfgramm, & S. Kilic, 2013, Köln: Carl Link.

Structural elements in the CPSM competence model (Huber et al., 2013) are situated at a general level of performance like analytical reasoning and text comprehension, speed of thought, and planning skills. Furthermore, a general level of commitment as readiness for duty, a level of motivation and avoidance of failure is assessed. Within the framework of CPSM, ‘dealing with others’ such as empathy, an ability to accept criticism and also sociability is considered. A leader also needs to deal with change, has to have an innovative spirit and a motivation for shaping change. Moreover, the ability to work under pressure and to have confidence in one’s own abilities are considered to be important, also when dealing with internal resources. The authors of the CPSM model developed an online tool on integrated assessment items that generate individual data covering the leadership areas mentioned, which can be processed through an online assessment with individual findings for the participants.

Why do we present another model if there are already several available, of which two particular ones were presented above? Leithwood, Day,

Sammons, Harris and Hopkins (2006, p. 7) argue that 'leadership by an adjective is a growth industry', and therefore it is currently also *en vogue* to present models as an additive sum of competences. However, leadership in action is not a static phenomenon but is deeply rooted in a leader's personal mastery of challenges he or she is confronted with. For Senge (1990, p. 141) '[p]ersonal [m]astery goes beyond competence and skills, though it is grounded in competence and skills' as '[p]eople with high levels of personal mastery are continually expanding their ability to create the results in life they truly seek' (ibid.). Moreover, 'the ability to focus on ultimate intrinsic desires, not only on secondary goals, is a cornerstone of personal mastery' (Senge, 1990, p. 148). Senge's concept of personal mastery served as an underlying framework for the newly developed model called *FieldTransformation*<sup>360</sup> (FTF<sup>360</sup>).

FTF<sup>360</sup> is based on the theories of interactional patterns, pathologies and paradoxes (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967), depth psychology (Riemann, 1961), Theory U (Scharmer, 2009) and the methods and models clarifying conversations within conflicts in professional frameworks (Thomann, 2014) combined with the outcome of the analytical examination of interpersonal communication in education (Wiesner, 2010). Senge (1990, 2006) dealt with personal mastery from a more organisational point of view towards the capacity of learning of an organisation as a whole, the learning organisation; therefore, personal mastery is interpreted as a more value-based, intrinsic and motivational statement on the individual as well as on the organisational levels. Consequently, personal mastery aims at the professional self, but not just as professional knowledge, also with oneself as a whole and to make oneself aware (Schratz, Paseka, & Schritteser, 2011).

Within this context, leadership is associated with 'being visionary, motivational, inspirational and innovative' (Schley & Schratz, 2011, p. 276) towards emerging future possibilities (Scharmer, 2009) as 'the experience of letting go and then going forth into another world that begins to take shape only once we overcome the fear of stepping into the unknown, is at the very heart and essence of leadership' (Scharmer, 2009, p. 467). In fact, leadership 'creates the vision, faces the emerging future, and turns feelings of uncertainty into clarity and attractive goals' (Schley & Schratz, 2011, p. 288) while 'the heartbeat of leadership is a relationship, not a person or process' (Sergiovanni, 2005, p. 53).

FTF<sup>360</sup> consists of different fields (quadrants in Figure 4), which are set up between the poles of stability and development on the one hand, and relationships and content, on the other.

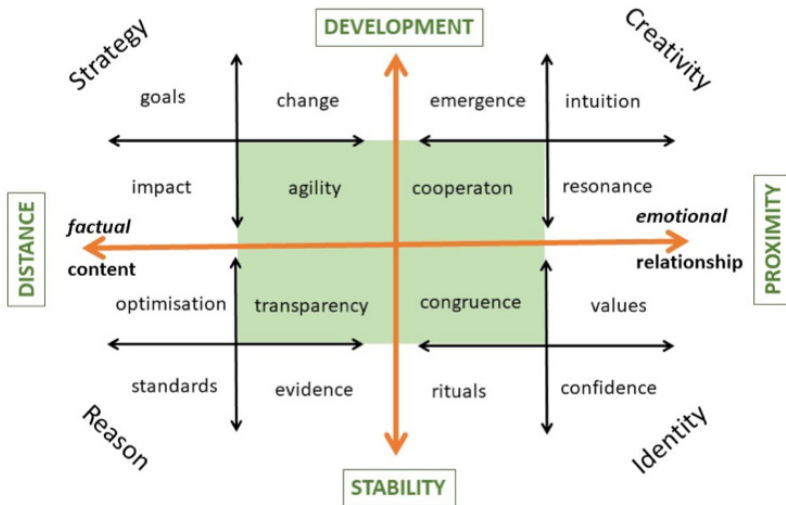


Figure 3. FieldTransFormation<sup>360</sup>. Adapted from “School leadership in German speaking countries with an emphasis on Austria: A re-vision” by C. Wiesner, A. George, D. Kemethofer, & M. Schratz, 2015, *Ricercazione*, 7(2), p. 82.

In the FTF<sup>360</sup> model, the first square (bottom left; hereafter clockwise), each containing four thematic fields, represents ‘rational processes’ of reason and sanity, the second ‘strategic processes’ of objectives and goals, the third ‘creative processes’ of ambition and creation and the fourth ‘identity processes’ of grounding and values regarding educational leadership [...]’ (Wiesner et al., 2015, p. 82). Working with the model gives leaders and researchers an understanding of the leadership *culture* in the dynamic framework between stability and development as well as distance (factual content) and proximity (emotional relationship), which determines the space of opportunities for each leadership action (Schratz et al., 2016, p. 232).

All the 16 fields and their processes in the FTF<sup>360</sup> model should support the enlargement, enrichment, and empowerment of educational leaders in shaping their attitudes (Schratz et al., 2016; Steinkellner & Wiesner, 2017; Wiesner et al., 2015). FTF<sup>360</sup> thus makes it possible to describe one’s personal mastery (Schratz, 2015; Senge, 1990, 2006; Wiesner et al., 2015) allowing the movement of *field activations* to be recorded and also to be reported on. In this sense, FTF<sup>360</sup> goes beyond competence and knowledge or experience and interprets the movements in and between its fields as a creative work. The model represents a creative, resonant, and conforming conception of life and thus fits more into the overall systemic context of personal mastery according to Senge (1990, 2006) through the systematic structure of and throughout the 16 fields (quadrants in Figure 3).

FTF<sup>360</sup> might help in making the next step in building a theory of acquisition of a system of ethical and desirable attitudes (*Haltung*) through the mediation and appropriation of knowledge, experience and in such a way that educational leaders can choose and identify their position in the context of their social world, and to unfold a personality and gain sense and values of life and action (Schley & Schratz, 2011). FTF<sup>360</sup> systematically identifies success conditions for effective, goal- and value-oriented school leadership and, thus, successful school improvement while allowing both structured and evidence-oriented research. Herewith, the model goes beyond conventional competence schemes of school leadership or expert knowledge and understands the enactment of personal mastery as a representation of a creative, resonant, and co-responsive approach towards the world. The authors of the instrument assert that the importance, understanding, and application of school transformation for educational leaders are at the core of effective school development as a communicational change process between different fields.

### **FieldTransFormation<sup>360</sup> in use: context and methodology**

It seems, that '[d]espite the well-known impact of principals towards school quality improvement, Austrian school research is not strongly developed in the field of school leadership research and therefore has little effect on policy and practice' (Wiesner et al., 2015, p. 66). Furthermore, 'it appears inevitable that full attention will have to be paid to school leadership research [...]. A new, broad and exciting field of school leadership research is therefore *currently* emerging' (Wiesner et al., 2015, p. 83). In the following, the context and methodology of the application of FTF<sup>360</sup> are presented.

#### **Context**

FTF<sup>360</sup> originates from an Austrian initiative funded by the Austrian Ministry of Education called 'Leadership Academy' (LEA), which serves as an initiative to further professionalise people holding leadership positions in the Austrian education system (Leadership Academy, 2018). The mission of the LEA

[...] is to help develop more effective leadership capable of meeting the social, technological, and political challenges creating change in Austrian education. Graduates of the LEA should have the skills to implement the significant new educational reforms underway at national and provincial levels and constitute a critical mass of proactive, system-wise leaders capable of transforming the system. (Stoll, Moorman, & Rahm, 2007, p. 4)

The concept of the LEA assumes that school climate and school quality are significantly influenced by school leadership and that school leaders are amongst the most critical change agents in schools. Against the background of the social framework, political conditions and new challenges to the school system, school leaders must be competent in dealing with transformation (Schratz, Hartmann, & Schley, 2010, p. 29). To satisfy the required needs, the self-assessment model had to be based on the current state of research as well as differentiated practical knowledge from the field of school leadership qualification. It should cover a competence structure of social and situational actions, conflate existing tasks and requirements of school leadership, and show possible ways towards transformation in the emerging future (Wiesner et al., 2015). In this sense, leadership is a specific attitude and watchful care, *Haltung* (Steinkellner & Wiesner, 2017), directed towards the future, which is to be enacted in the present as leaders have to act in the present by sensing the future in a given present moment (Scharmer, 2009).

Until 2015, the participants of the LEA were asked to take part in an online 360-degree assessment on results-based leadership, which had been adapted from the work of Ulrich, Zenger, and Smallwood (2000); their instrument was originally developed in the economic realm and was eventually adapted for educational leaders (Pool, 2007). Over the years, this instrument proved to be less effective in assessing desired leadership capacities with a particular view towards educational leadership improvement. That is why the directors of the LEA started looking for a new model that would be more in line with the curriculum of the LEA, which led to the development of FTF<sup>360</sup> presented in Figure 3.

FTF<sup>360</sup> relates to the capacity of educational leaders to transform teaching environments through inspiring teachers as well as pupils through better learning opportunities, as the model, for example in the Austrian LEA, assists in 'building self knowledge [which is] needed to marshal personal resources for emotionally and intellectually stressful challenges of leadership' (Stoll et al., 2007, p. 17) as well as 'opening participants up to the habit of changing their "mental models" and assumptions of "the way it is"' (Stoll et al., 2007, p. 18) as '[a] leader has to know about [...] the different facets of personality that shape any person's action, and be able to balance those inner voices to become authentic' (Stoll et al., 2007, p. 24).

Based on this framework, an online questionnaire was developed in 2015 in collaboration with the Federal Institute for Educational Research, Innovation and Development of the Austrian School System (BIFIE). The application of the instrument in the LEA was meant to serve two purposes. Firstly, on the

personal level, the participants used the results, which they receive as a diagram (Figure 5), immediately after having answered the online questionnaire as self-assessment of their leadership mastery, which offers them orientation and direction.

Secondly, on the collective level, the aggregated data are used for monitoring purposes during the LEA, where they are presented in a plenary meeting and serve the individual participants as reference points in relation to their own assessment results. Moreover, the data from the different generations of participants at the LEA can be used collectively to gain empirically based knowledge for leadership research and thus provide monitoring data on their leadership journeys during the year-long programme.

## Method

For understanding the concept of personal mastery of the FTF<sup>360</sup>, there is a need to recognise and reflect on the interpersonal and organisational processes of conceptualising, designing, learning and unlearning as well as formative implementing, transforming, and evaluating: To include multiple perspectives, the online questionnaire was developed and based on a literature review, on intensive experience with leadership and teacher development by the LEA directors and also a deep understanding of policy culture matters (Schratz, 2012). The statements regarding the 16 fields differ in the assessment of the general significance of a field and the assessment of one's own personal mastery. This creates a juxtaposition between the general assessment of significance and the assessment of existing, lived and experienced reality. At the beginning there are statements referring to the personality (personal self-image) which are provocatively formulated between extreme poles of the respective field, both to prevent an assessment by the outer edges of the scale as well as in the further course of the survey as well as to prevent all questions being answered solely in a socially desirable way.

Drawing from these processes, a 64-item questionnaire with a 5-point Likert-Scale (1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – can't decide, 4 – agree, and 5 – strongly agree) was developed by Christian Wiesner, Michael Schratz, Wilfried Schley and David Kemethofer taking the theoretical approach of FTF<sup>360</sup> into account. Within the 16 thematic fields in 4 main squares in Figure 3, there were additional questions about school culture, evidence-oriented school development or working with evidence in everyday school life. The questionnaire was designed according to the main concepts of the 16 FTF<sup>360</sup> fields, and the items in each domain were found to be highly reliable (Wiesner et al., 2015).

The design of the instrument prefers a middle value of points to be achieved by each participant in all 16 fields of FTF<sup>360</sup>. The highest agreement of the statements of one of the 16 fields in Figure 3 would be 8 points, the lowest 1 point. The aim is to normally have a middle value of points between 4 and 5 in all fields. When a leader reaches this middle score, he or she can move between the fields extremely flexibly and use all of the 16 fields equally and without blind spots, like a dance 'that enables developing and stabilising actions as enlargement, enrichment and empowerment' (Steinkellner & Wiesner, 2017, p. 266). With an attained score of 1 to 3 points, the affected fields have potential for development, expansion and the fields could be a blind spot, a topic and questions of a specific subject that an educational leader does not consider in his/her decision process. With a score of 6 to 8 points, the fields are very powerful and probably internalised, but it also creates an effect of certain fields to be at the expense of others.

For the first time data was collected for validating the theoretical concept of the model for reflecting the interpersonal and organisational practice from 50 participants of the 13<sup>th</sup> LEA Generation in Spring 2015, in a research partnership between the University of Innsbruck and the BIFIE. A second dataset for validating the theoretical concept was collected in autumn 2016 with 123 participants of the 14<sup>th</sup> LEA Generation in the same research partnership. This second dataset is presented in this article. A total of 123 persons in the field of educational leadership participated in the second step of the research process. The data included 68 women (55%) and 55 men (45%) with differing experience in educational leadership between 6 and 21 years. In this second application, the instrument of the FTF<sup>360</sup> was further enhanced by putting the 16 thematic fields in comparison so that the participants had to choose a field in favour of the other due to the confrontative presentation of the statements in the online questionnaire. The deliberate confrontation and the conscious choice should help to stimulate the process-oriented character of the model. All participants received a personal evaluation immediately after the online-survey as evidence, which serves the purpose of personal reflection in their professionalisation process.

## Results

In line with the aims and expectations of the professionalisation of leaders in Austria, the self-assessment instrument was developed according to the theory of FTF<sup>360</sup>, assuming that all educational leaders as a community should reach a common systemic position between 3 and 4 points. Figure 4 presents the *aggregation of all individual data* of all the online-questionnaire participating

attendees of LEA Generation 14 ( $n = 123$ ). Clearly, the aggregated points of each field are located around this middle position. The diagram has a shape like a circle and displays a satisfactory result in terms of the FTF<sup>360</sup> concept. The diagram represents the theory that a system always has all components and mastery to work well-structured, well-functional in a well-being way of a dynamic structure between stability and development as well as proximity and distance in relationships and partnerships. The data show the participating leaders' overall aggregated cumulative results between 4 and 5 points as a conflux. The diagram (Figure 4) with the results of the members of LEA Generation 14 shows that all leaders together seem to have a common and collective systemic mastery without any obvious blind spots in the 16 fields of FTF<sup>360</sup>; however, the individual cases may show more discrepancies, as presented further below (Figure 5).

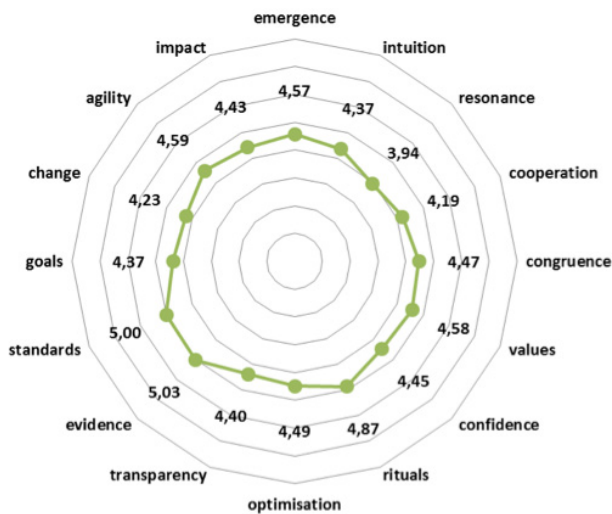


Figure 4. Mean values of data relating to the 16 fields of the FTF<sup>360</sup> of educational leaders in LEA Generation 14 ( $n=123$ ).

A significant, statistically meaningful difference between the sexes exists when  $p \leq .050$  (T-Test). Such a value can only be found in the field evidence,  $p \leq .042$  (t-test) and Cohen's  $d = -.37$ . Women on average scored higher than men, and the mean was higher among female than among male participants. Men as educational leaders tend to operate from the fields of congruence, cooperation, optimisation and transformation. Overall, however, gender does not appear to be a very significant factor in the evaluation of the 16 fields (Table 1).

Table 1

*Differences FTF<sup>360</sup> findings between Women and Men in LEA Generation 14*

Squares & Fields		Cronbach's $\alpha$	Gender	M (SD)	$p$	$d$
Strategy (Strategie)	Goals Imagery (Zielbild)	$\alpha = .90$	w m	4.39 (1.05) 4.34 (.92)	.744	-.05
	Change (Wandlung) as development and alteration	$\alpha = .70$	w m	4.15 (.80) 4.36 (.90)	.176	.25
	Self-Impact (Wirkkraft)	$\alpha = .87$	w m	4.46 (1.03) 4.38 (.95)	.678	-.08
	Agility (Agilität)	$\alpha = .87$	w m	4.64 (1.17) 4.52 (1.18)	.552	-.10
Creativity (Gestaltung)	Emergence (Emergenz)	$\alpha = .87$	w m	4.57 (1.05) 4.58 (1.11)	.960	.01
	Intuition (Intuition) and visionary	$\alpha = .89$	w m	4.21 (1.03) 4.58 (1.27)	.073	.32
	Cooperation (Kooperation)	$\alpha = .85$	w m	4.10 (1.01) 4.31 (1.01)	.269	.21
	Resonance (Resonanz)	$\alpha = .93$	w m	3.93 (1.30) 3.96 (1.19)	.877	.02
Reason (Vernunft)	Optimisation (Optimierung) as improvement	$\alpha = .96$	w m	4.41 (1.02) 4.58 (1.14)	.374	.16
	Transparency (Transparenz)	$\alpha = .93$	w m	4.46 (1.07) 4.33 (1.20)	.521	-.12
	Standards (Standards) as guidelines and norms	$\alpha = .77$	w m	5.10 (1.22) 4.87 (1.14)	.294	-.19
	Evidence (Evidenz)	$\alpha = .77$	w m	5.23 (1.21) 4.79 (1.14)	.042	-.37
Identity (Identität)	Congruence (Kongruenz)	$\alpha = .91$	w m	4.38 (.77) 4.60 (.88)	.143	.27
	Values (Werte)	$\alpha = .95$	w m	4.54 (.90) 4.65 (1.07)	.537	.11
	Rituals (Rituale)	$\alpha = .77$	w m	4.85 (.90) 4.77 (.98)	.309	-.09
	Confidence (Vertrauen)	$\alpha = .93$	w m	4.49 (.97) 4.39 (1.07)	.581	-.10
n (w/women) = 68; n (m/men) = 55						

Note. N = 123.

Another – very different – result is found at the *individual level* of the FTF<sup>360</sup>, where several very personal shapes are visible. Because the instrument juxtaposes the 16 fields, in answering the questionnaire the participants had to decide among the different field statements according to their every-day decision-making in school life. Figure 5 shows two individual evaluations of the diagrams that all participants immediately receive as evidence

of their self-assessment results after finishing the online survey of the FTF<sup>360</sup> questionnaire.

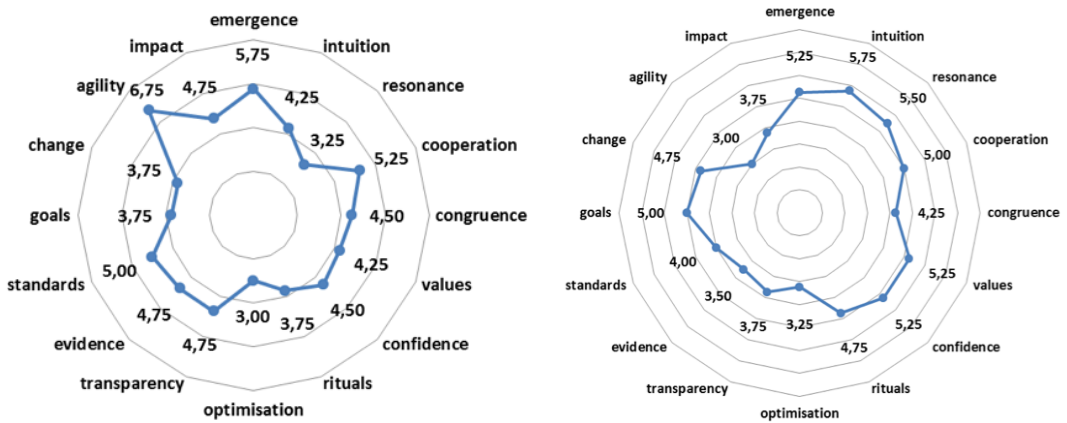


Figure 5. Self-assessment diagrams of two participants of LEA Generation 14 relating to the 16 fields of FTF<sup>360</sup>, showing different sets of values.

The left diagram in Figure 5 presents the results of an educational leader whose field activations are highest in agility, emergence, cooperation and standards. These findings could help him or her to reflect on the results with lower numbers, such as goal orientation and strategic thinking in change management issues. The results in the right diagram of Figure 5 present a very different shape of the self-assessment. The field activations are highest in the areas of creativity and identity according to Figure 3. The person's leadership interventions seem to be more towards the proximal side of the spectrum being resonant with his or her staff and creating confidence in identity building with goals for change processes in mind. However, his or her results in other strategic issues like agility and impact are lower, which is also the case with optimisation, evidence and standards.

The image and shape of the individual participants' diagrams should stimulate cognitive and creative thinking about their own personal and organisational sources of communication, commitment, values, beliefs and energy, bringing them in resonance to their own supportive reflection. The shapes of the school leaders' own assessment of personal mastery as shown in Figure 5 can help them to analyse their performance holistically and to build new prototypes of action accordingly. Within the context of the LEA, the individual results primarily serve participants to provide evidence-based support for their own personal professional development processes.

Working with this particular leadership model opens up a comprehensible

‘classification of one’s respective leadership into the dynamic structure between stability and development as well as proximity and distance, which determines the scope for leadership’ (Schratz et al., 2016, p. 232). Successful as well as sustainable results emerge from everyday identification and transparent reasoning while forming new self-contained shapes requires mobility and field activations. The respective particular form at a location always corresponds to the specific realisation of the development: identity processes as a source of experiencing the agile power of one’s own strategic thinking and acting; creative processes as an experience of belonging to a community and sharing the world cooperatively, to understand others and to be understood by them; rational processes to understand the world appropriately and in a sensible way, to be able to act on it and to expand them. Reflecting on the individual results of the FTF<sup>360</sup>, an educational leader can sustainably work on her/his further professional development. Looking at the results of one cohort of an LEA generation, areas for development can be discerned, as well as particular areas of strength and excellence both on the individual and collective levels. The results indicate that showing the direction for innovation and change and enabling the development of organisational achievement are crucial elements of the leadership challenge. Furthermore, the results indicate that defining a direction of innovation and development and generating organisational performance(s) are amongst the challenges faced by leaders in the Austrian education system.

## Conclusion

In this paper, FTF<sup>360</sup> was introduced, which can be applied and used to explore the personal mastery of educational leaders by means of an online questionnaire. After the discussion of two established models that have been used successfully in their respective contexts, the founding context of the and its theoretical underpinnings are described.

Researching traits of personal mastery based on the data and facts applying FTF<sup>360</sup> provides insights about pedagogical leadership. We see the full potential of FTF<sup>360</sup> on the personal level as FTF<sup>360</sup> provides detailed feedback, which can support the participants to search for effective indicators and successful conditions for school and quality development processes, also by comparing it to the aggregated data.

However, several limitations of FTF<sup>360</sup> should be mentioned: Some limitation may remain within the 16 fields. The formation of these fields was based on an extensive literature review and lengthy professional experience in theoretical educational leadership; however, not all activations of the 16 fields can

be made visible due to the complexity of the concept of personal mastery. This might have a relevant influence on quality evaluation within the axes between stability and development, reasonable factual analysis and cooperative community and joint value development. Another limitation occurs when one of the fields receives too much emphasis, which causes a loss of balance. As with a scale with four scales, it could represent a dynamic movement that easily maintains an imbalance but appears relatively stable with a high weight on one side. Finally, FTF<sup>360</sup> might be approached by participants in a socially desirable manner, or in a way that the participants would like to see themselves – hence, participants of FTF<sup>360</sup> are asked to respond in a differentiated and self-critical way and to carefully transfer abstract statements of the questionnaire to their current every day and leadership situations.

Future research might shed light on, for example, how to further analyse data collected over time from the same or different leaders, also within different contexts. Applying the assessment tool again after some time could help to see different results of the individual school leaders since they might change in personal mastery over time. Furthermore, it might seem appealing to look more closely at selected school leaders to explore in more detail how they use the results of FTF<sup>360</sup> for their continuous professional development, for example, by conducting interviews with their staff members and other stakeholders.

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