

## LEADING IN COMPLEX SURROUNDINGS

*Planning the unknown and dealing with the unpredictable*

### Course description

The course offers managers and leaders at different levels an opportunity to reflect on their leadership practice, share experiences and knowledge with others in leadership positions and gain a deeper insight into the range of approaches they can use in their organisation.

This course looks at the complexity of leadership and the paradoxes inherent in organisational life, where managers are expected to plan and control even when the future is unpredictable and unknown, uphold high quality with budget cuts, motivate people while introducing methods of control, and maintain operation while innovating the services/education. And in all of this they are expected to communicate with clarity and direction while at the same time involve their staff (and volunteers) in decision making. Often people in leadership positions feel that they are doing a lot of fire-fighting with no time for strategic development.

Rather than offering models, management tools and quick fixes, the course gives the participant a chance to reflect upon their practice, taking their experiences and their doubts seriously. It will give them a chance to gain deeper insights into the complexity of their work, and through this new ideas on how to balance between opposing demands, different and sometimes conflicting stakes, navigate in unpredictable environments and leading conversations in the organisation that push in certain directions. We will look at the relational aspects of organisational life, the many perspectives on reality and the logic in each of them. We will apply the ideas both to the day-to-day management, strategic goals as well as to innovation.

### The course will give you...

- A theoretical understanding of complexity and social constructionist theories on leadership
- A chance to explore different metaphors on organisations and leadership and their consequences
- A look at the paradoxes in your leadership and reflect upon the balance in each context
- A chance to engage in self-reflection (seeing your own role in the organisational patterns) and self-reflexivity (understanding the assumptions behind your perspective)
- An ability to step into the shoes of other strategic actors and understand their values, concerns and logic
- An opportunity to step back and reflect on the strategic goals of your organisation and the role of planning in strategic management
- An understanding of innovation and how to notice it and nurture it.



## Methodology

The course will consist of a mix of short theoretical inputs, concrete exercises, and group discussions. There will be a lot of time spent on reflecting on own cases as well as sharing of knowledge and experience with other people in leadership positions - within a clear frame.

The course will be based on the theoretical developments within social constructionist and complexity theory applied to leadership. In spite of the theoretical basis, the training will be highly practical.

## Programme

- Monday** Arrival in the evening  
Welcome drink  
Presentation and programme
- Tuesday** Introduction: learning goals and learning agreement  
Input on social constructionist and complexity theory
- Exploring organisational metaphors and ideas on leadership
  - Paradoxes in leadership
- Wednesday** Who am I as a leader? - exploring my intentions and values  
Paradoxes in my organisational context and leadership
- Overplaying own strengths and values
  - Reflection and reflexivity - understanding my role in patterns and the assumptions I act by
  - Stepping into shoes of others and exploring paradoxes arising from different perspectives
- Thursday** Strategic goals
- Leadership pipeline - my position in the organisation
  - Planning vs. unpredictability
  - Strategic conversations
  - Translating vision into concrete daily practice
  - Good reasons behind resistance
  - Opening up and closing down the complexity in strategic processes
-  **Friday** Innovation
- Discovering and nurturing continuous or emerging change
  - Power and politics in relation to innovation
- Looking back at learning outcome  
Evaluation
-  **Saturday** Departure
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# PRACTICAL INFORMATION

## Dates, time and place

This course will be organised on a regular basis. [Please check here](#) to see when and where.

All courses will start with a short welcome drink at 20.00 p.m. on Monday evening and end on Friday around 16.00 p.m.

## Consultants

The consultant that will be running this course is either [Yvor Broer](#) or [Lene Mogensen](#). Depending on the group size a second consultant will be attracted. As we are currently enlarging our organisation, we might place another consultant than above at this course and communicate this well in advance of the course.

## Price

The fee for this course is 750 Euros, excluding travel, food and accommodation. This course is in line with the criteria and priorities of the Erasmus+ programme of the EU. This means that you can apply for a grant to cover most costs, given the criteria that you are working in school education, adult education, vocational education or some parts of higher education. [Have a look here for more information](#).

## Registration

You can register for one of our courses by downloading the registration form on our home page, on the [registration page](#) for open courses. After receiving your form, we will reserve a place for you on the course. There is a maximum of 18 participants per course.

In case you want to use the Erasmus+ programme for a grant to cover e.g. travel, accommodation and course fee, more information and application form can be found on the [information page](#) on that programme

After registering we will be glad to assist you in booking a room and arranging your travel.



## About In Dialogue

In Dialogue is a consultancy corporation that works with development of individuals, leaders, consultants, teams, organisations and communities. In Dialogue was established in 2004 and got its recent name in 2007.

Our consultants work within the approach of In Dialogue, when inspiring change, development and growth. We closely follow new academic developments and are proud of translating new theories into practical and sustainable solutions to your challenges. All the consultants have a higher degree in relevant sciences as well as a proven capacity to translate their knowledge into practice - e.g. in relation to coaching, conflict mediation, project management and organisational change and learning.

We operate in various parts of the world, and all consultants have extensive national as well as international experience and are trained in applying their competences in culturally sensitive ways. Our main office is located in Copenhagen, Denmark. Next to that we have an office in the city of Gouda, The Netherlands. Read more on [our homepage](#) or contact us via [opencourses@in-dialogue.org](mailto:opencourses@in-dialogue.org)

## In Dialogues' courses

In Dialogue makes sure that learning at our courses is contextualised and therefore relevant for the challenges of the participants. Theory is put into action through concrete training of new competences as well as through working on the cases from the group:

- The courses are well structured though still flexible to allow for adjustments based on the dialogue with the participants about their concrete challenges, needs and previous experiences
- The international setting ensures an inspiring environment where the diversity of contexts, challenges and ideas are used to increase the understanding of complexity and diverse ways of dealing with issues.
- Our courses are based on a sound theoretical foundation of social constructionist theory. This means that we draw upon innovative approaches such as the narrative, systemic, appreciative and solution focused approaches.
- We believe that there lies a greater potential for development in strengths than in weaknesses. We therefore focus on applying the resources of each participant to reach his/her learning goals and to build an appreciative working atmosphere within the group.
- It is important for In Dialogue that everyone leaves our courses feeling empowered and competent to apply the concrete outcome of the course in his/her daily work - knowing in which situations to use which techniques and when not to use them.

