So what does the Vice-President for Research do, and how did I get here?

Researchers into Management Workshop, November 2017

Professor Colette Fagan

1. **My institutional role: Vice-President for Research**

   - Research strategy
   - Other executive (senior leadership team) responsibilities – SLT is responsible for decisions for the entire portfolio (finance, estates, HR, IT…)
   - Also - Senate-elected member of the Board of Governors

2. **Reflections on experiences of becoming a leader**

   - Career journey from postdoc to vice-president (incremental steps rather than a ten year strategic plan)
   - The challenges and rewards (and synergies with research or other activities?)
   - Balancing leadership with other professional activities (research) and everything else (life beyond work)

3. **Questions, comment, discussion**

1. Institutional role

Manchester 2020: The Strategic Plan

Three core goals:

- **World-class research**

- Outstanding learning and student experience
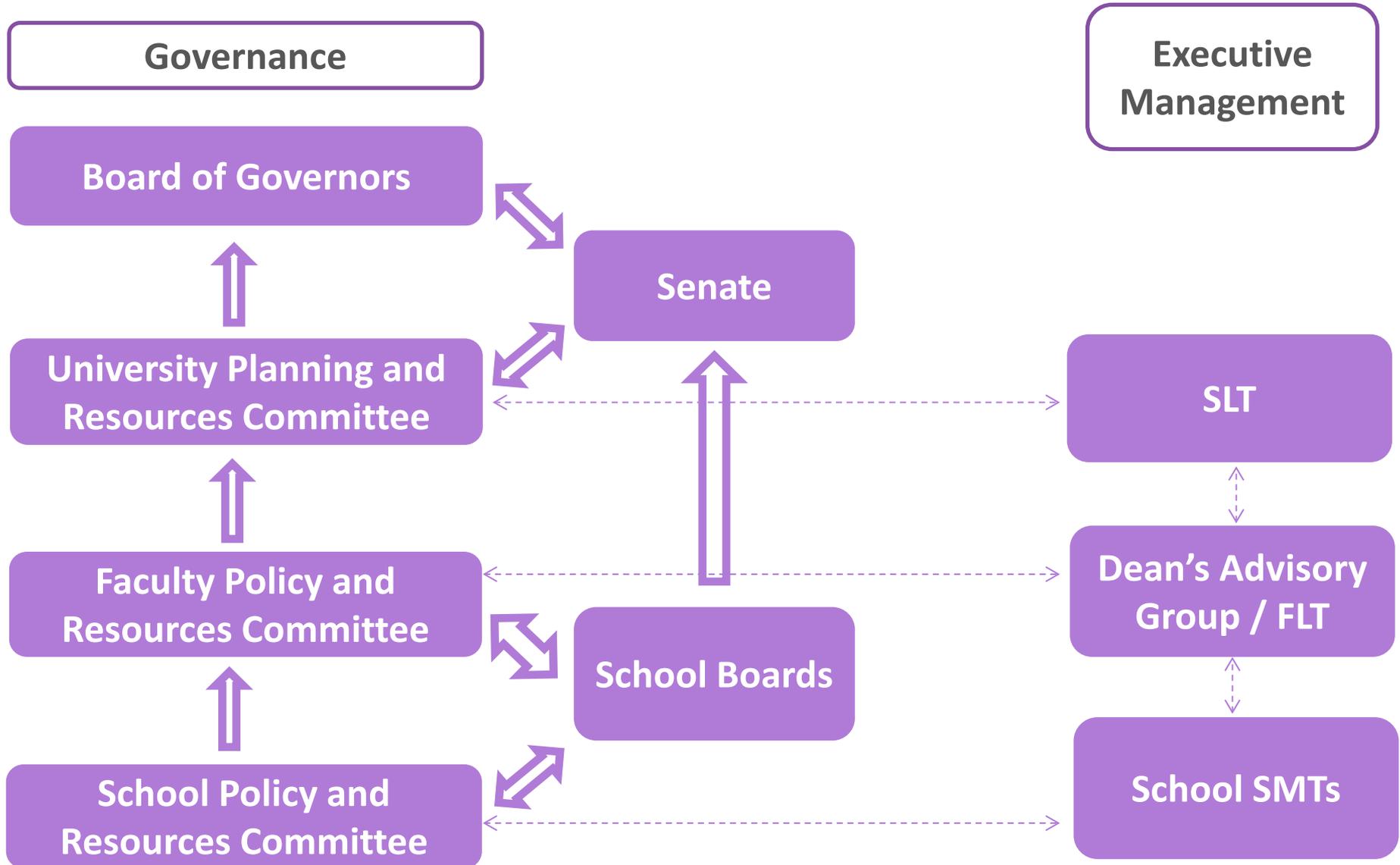
- Social responsibility

Research	
VP Research	**Colette Fagan**
AVP	**Matt Lambon-Ralph (inc. MDC & research staff)**
AVP	**(tbc- recruitment pending)**
AVP Research ethics	**Nalin Thakkar**
Vice-Deans for Research	**Nigel Hooper (BMH), Stephen Yeates (FSE), Gerard Hodgkinson (Hum)**
Business engagement	
Deputy V-C	**Luke Georghiou**
AVP business engagement	**Chris Taylor (also IT, open data)**
AVP international	**Steve Flint**
Directorate of Research and Business Engagement Services	
Director: Andrew Walsh	

1. **Strategic plan**
2. **Progress against plan**
3. **External challenges**
4. **Priority actions**

Relationship between Governance and Management

Governance

Executive Management

Board of Governors

Senate

University Planning and Resources Committee

SLT

Faculty Policy and Resources Committee

School Boards

Dean's Advisory Group / FLT

School Policy and Resources Committee

School SMTs

- [Manchester2020](#)

- [University Research Strategy 2015](#)

- [Statement of Research Expectations](#)

- [Annual Stocktake Report: 2015/16](#)

"***The University will perform research of the highest quality and continue to raise the level and ambition of our activities to world leading standards of excellence***" *(University Research Strategy)*

We must

- increase the amount of research which is at the very highest levels of excellence;

- raise aspirations and capacity to tackle ambitious research questions;

- aim for the most prestigious journals, book publishers and awards.

Financial challenges

- **Pension deficit**

- **Managing pay costs**

- **Brexit**

- **Student fees**

- **Visas**

- **Government funding**

- **High level of investment in south-east (offset by Northern Powerhouse)**

World-class research

- Accelerate progress towards research targets through implementation of refreshed research strategy

Outstanding learning and student experience

- Improve key areas of teaching performance

Social responsibility

- Deliver a focused, distinctive and effective programme of activity

Enabling strategies

- Create financial headroom to invest in future ambitions, through identifying efficiencies, additional funding & areas for strategic investment

- Increase efficiency and effectiveness in University processes and procedures through simplification and standardisation

- **Increase Research Grant and Contract income generation and diversify funding sources, including philanthropy**

- **Raise the quality of all aspects of our research outputs and improve academic standing and impact in preparation for 'REF2021'**

- **Develop and evidence the socio-economic and cultural impact of our research;**

- **Support our postgraduate research (PGR) students in developing as future leaders and be among the best performers within the Russell Group in terms of PhD completion**

MANCHESTER
1824

The University of Manchester

- **To achieve research excellence, including building on our REF2014 results to reach our REF2021 performance targets, alongside teaching excellence**

- **To develop and promote the value and non-academic impact of our research**

- **To build international research partnerships**

- **To grow research income, including funding for PGRs**

- **To attract high-quality PGR applicants and ensure they complete in a timely way**

High international standing	To be recognised as one of the 25 leading universities in the world, with 20% of subject areas in the top 20 (measured by International league tables).
Increase research funding	Total research grant and contract income to double by 2020 (from a baseline of 2010), ensuring an increase in • international and business income as a percentage of total income • Manchester's share of UK research grant and contract income.
Higher quality outputs	• Research excellence: 90% of staff are judged to be producing world-leading or internationally excellent research by peer review (3*/4*) in Research Excellence Framework, prepared for with our internal exercises (RRE) • High citations: share of publications in the top 10% of cited papers in line with UK's top five institutions.
Doctoral degrees	• Increase PGR student-to-staff ratio to be within the top five UK institutions • Ensure that at least 90% of students complete on time.
Economic Impact	• Generate cumulative £1billion of economic impact by 2025 from the intellectual property we generate

Turning strategy into priorities and actions (aka operational priorities)

- Nested layers

- External environment, for research:
    - Changing UK research funding landscape (UKRI, GCRF, Industrial Strategy & Industrial Strategy Challeng Fund, REF2021…TEF, KEF)
    - Brexit, internationalisation & other countries HE and R&D investment

- Competing agendas can produce cluttered delivery plans

- Assessing outcomes – KPIs and the tyranny of (over-) quantification

- Meetings, negotiation, consultation, engagement…

Imperfections and Tensions

- Scale and layers – coordination, alignment, compliance versus creativity, diversity, autonomy

- Points of tension - University v Faculty, Faculty v School, School v Dept.

- Efficiency – economies of scale versus local ownership and responsibility

- Communication – messages down v messages up

- Are the right people able to make the right decisions in the right place in the organisation at the right time?

2. Reflections on experiences of becoming a leader

- **Incremental planning:** Career journey from postdoc to vice-president (incremental steps rather than a ten year strategic plan)

- **High job satisfaction (I mostly love my job!):** The challenges and rewards (and synergies with research or other activities?)

- **Juggling as in most professions:** Balancing leadership with other professional activities (research) and everything else (life beyond work)

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World-class research
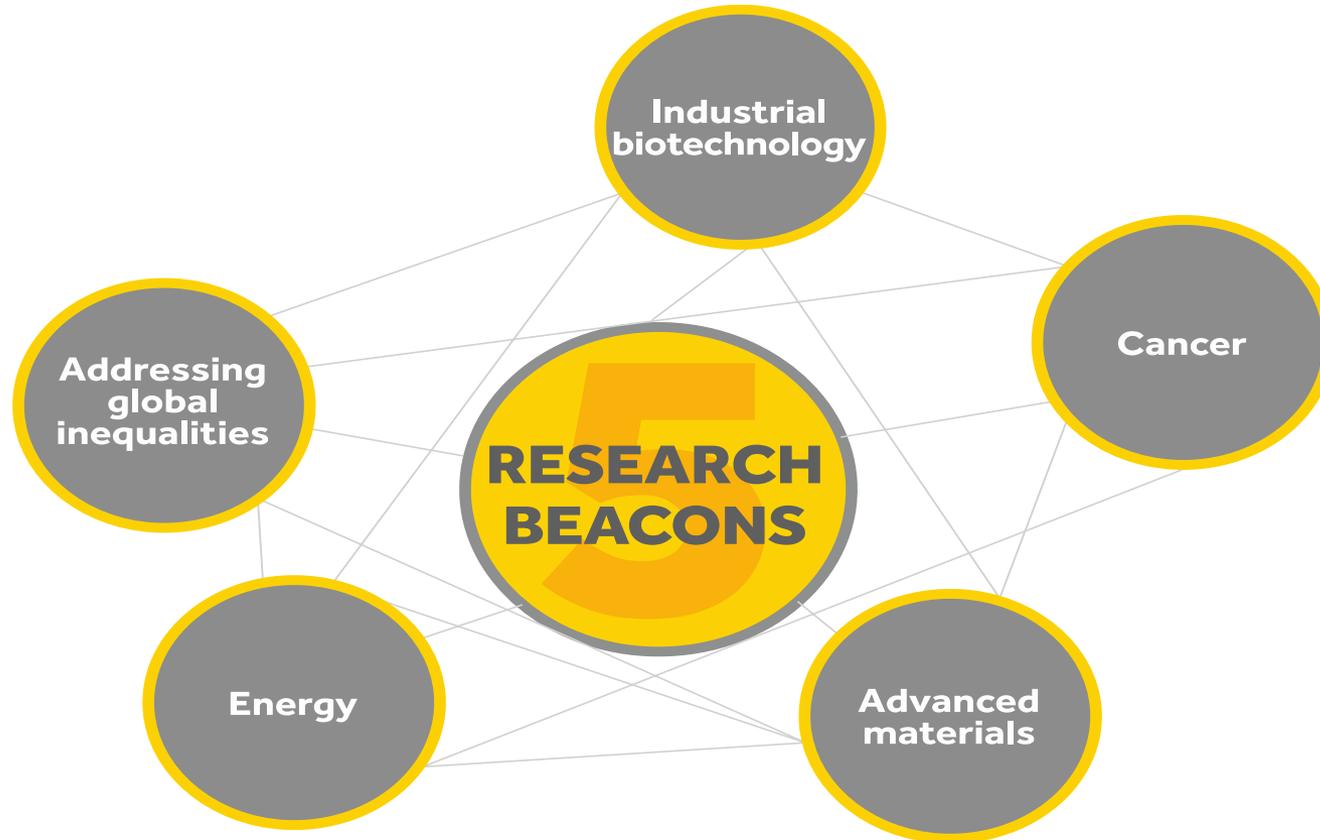
Plus: University of Manchester Research Institutes (UMRI) and Faculty/School Research Centres

» **Communicating and embedding the Research strategy and statement of research expectations**

- PI: Output quality, research funding, research ethics...
- Institutional support: infrastructure & resources, EDI...

- **REF2021 delivery, including**

  - Supporting production of 4* outputs
  - Impact cases

- **Attracting and developing researchers at all career stages from PGR onwards**

» **Engaging with new funding opportunities**

- GCRF, Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, Business engagement

- Resource support for targeted applications to large funding schemes

» **Providing focus and support for interdisciplinarity**

- Building on Research Beacons, strategic approach to promoting and coordinating key research themes

The University has high expectations of its researchers.

- To be recognised as one of the 25 leading universities in the world;
- To double total research grant and contract income by 2020;
- To improve the quality of research outputs, ensuring that 90% of staff are judged as producing world-leading or internationally excellent research;
- To ensure that the share of our publications falling in the top 10% of cited papers in their field matches that for the UK's top 5 institutions.
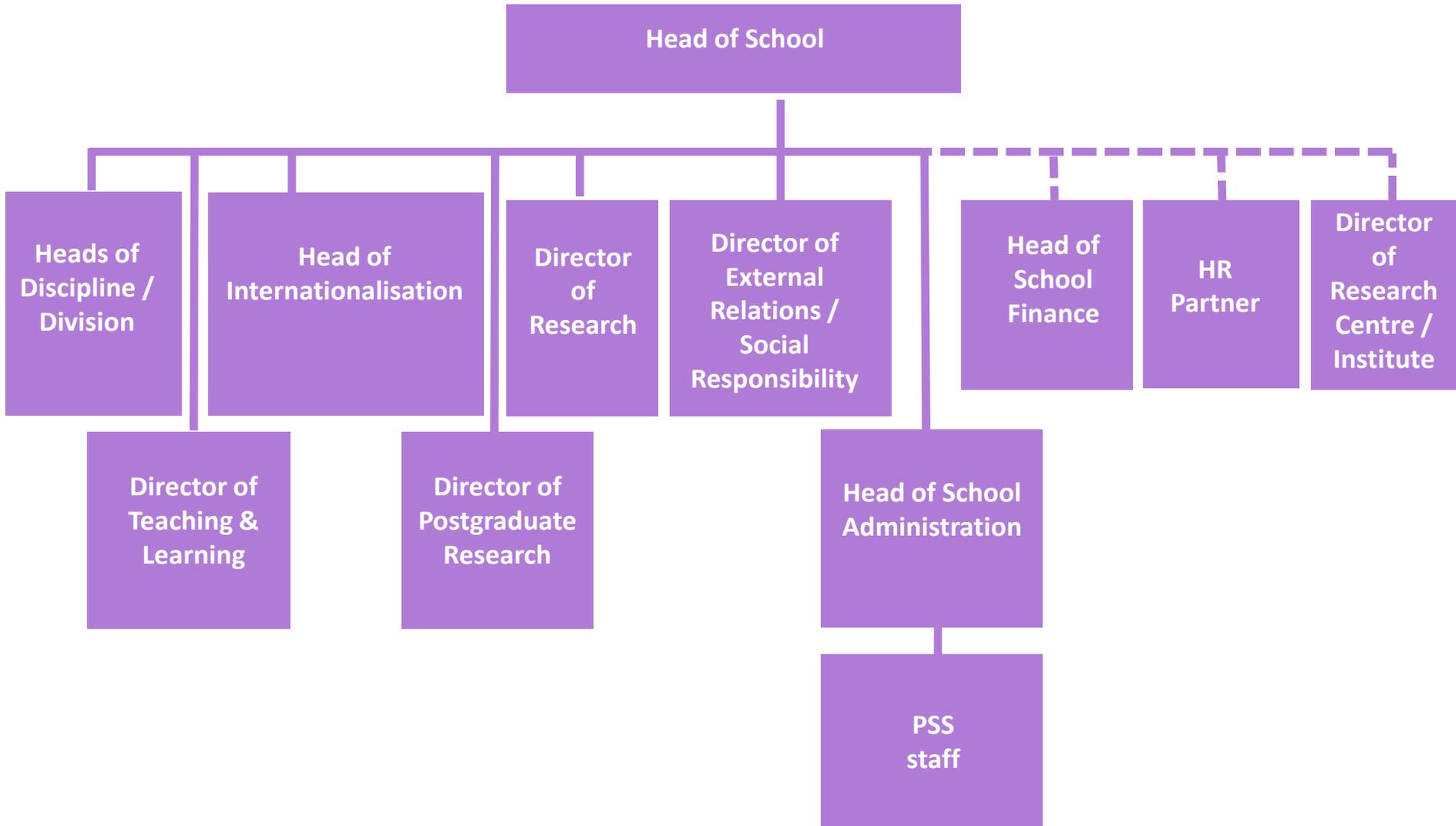
Governance

- Formal governance structure set out in Statutes and Ordinances

- Board of Governors

- Policy and Resources Committees

- Senate and School Boards (Academic)

So why are structures important?

- Structures need to support the effective overall management of the University

- Ensure focus on the strategic priorities

- Ensure that decisions are processed through the correct channels

- Support communication and engagement

- Structures are not culturally neutral

'Typical' School management

The University of Manchester

Head of School

- **Heads of Discipline / Division**
  - **Director of Teaching & Learning**
- **Head of Internationalisation**
  - **Director of Postgraduate Research**
- **Director of Research**
- **Director of External Relations / Social Responsibility**
  - **Head of School Administration**
    - **PSS staff**
- **Head of School Finance**
- **HR Partner**
- **Director of Research Centre / Institute**

Line Management Accountabilities – VP & Dean, Heads of Schools, Heads of Department/Division

- Leadership and management to ensure the Faculty/School/Department makes a full contribution to the University

- Strategic and operational planning

- Ensure operations meet all relevant statutory compliance requirements – quality standards, policies & procedures, financial, health and safety

- Leadership and management of academic staff, including ensuring appropriate levels of consultation and communication

- Management of budgets

- Internal and external representation

Policy Accountabilities – VP & Dean, Vice-Deans, Vice-Deans, School Function Directors

- Academic leadership for function across Faculty and Schools

- Strategic and operational planning

- Shaping and implementation of policies and procedures

- Quality Assurance

[Play Yes Minister clip](#)

Role of PSS

- Support the core goals of research, teaching and learning and social responsibility

- Overall drive is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of PSS support

- A strong academic/PSS partnership is important

- PSS operating as a single team across boundaries vertically and horizontally is also important

Leadership
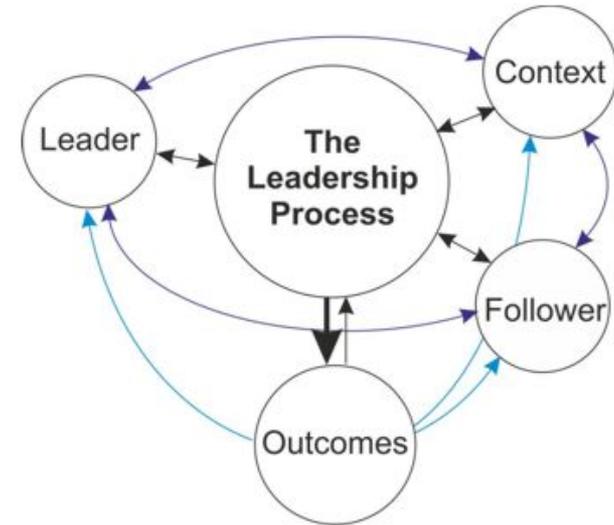
Leadership Qualities

Being the Boss helps but in itself it is not enough!

Assume leadership responsibility

Create a strong team around you and trust them to get on with it

Ensure you have effective communication channels

Consult widely and take advice but be prepared to be decisive

Be consistent, true to yourself and authentic