

Why a management framework?

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam considers good management and leadership as a precondition for a healthy working environment and for realizing our shared ambitions. Management means providing balanced guidance and support to employees and teams. You are responsible for the team's results, the development of and collaboration among employees, and in most cases also for the finances, processes and strategy within your scope (team, section, department, or unit).

In addition, managers also serve as role models in terms of leadership, which concerns everyone's personal behavior in investing in collaboration and communication with colleagues, and contributing as a team to the realization of the ambitions of VU Amsterdam. The principles of [Art of Engagement](#) serve as a guide for how we want to collaborate and communicate in teams.

Effective leadership is an art that requires continuous development. We are therefore committed to supporting managers by fostering a stimulating learning environment to help them fulfill their roles effectively.

The purpose of this framework is to provide a 'user manual' and inspiring framework for managers: what do we expect from you when you lead at one of the four management levels, and which training programs support you in doing so?

Who is this framework for and how do you use it?

The framework is intended for every **manager**, both academic (WP) and support staff (OBP), to clarify the tasks and responsibilities we expect at a specific management level at VU Amsterdam, as well as the relevant training programmes. Managerial responsibilities are part of the UFO profile and are further elaborated in this framework in terms of skills and specific tasks. If a task nevertheless does not fall within the manager's scope of responsibilities, it is important for the manager and their higher level manager to coordinate this.

In addition, it is intended for **HR advisors** who use the framework as a guide to support various HR processes such as onboarding new managers, recruitment, scans of potential, appointments, promotion, advising on team development and training management.

How does the framework relate to other tools?

- The [University Job Ranking System \(UFO\)](#) forms the basis of this leadership framework. The manager's tasks and responsibilities are elaborated in greater detail within the framework.
- This framework is structured in alignment with the education framework, so that different career paths can be viewed in a comparable manner.
- Within the Academic Career Paths framework (established 2023), leadership skills are a prerequisite for vertical promotion.

How is this framework structured?

The framework consists of four management levels. This classification is based on differences in responsibility and the nature of leadership:

1. Operational management: when you provide day-to-day guidance to employees.
2. Tactical management: when you are the direct and integral manager of one or more teams.
3. Strategic management: when you indirectly manage other managers and share responsibility for the strategy of the faculty or division.
4. Administrative management (faculty boards and directors of service departments): when you (co-)manage the faculty or division.

Notes on the Management Framework

- This framework describes the responsibilities of both academic (WP) and support staff (OBP) managers.
- When you assume a leadership role, you must begin the corresponding mandatory training program during your first year of your position or role.
- The mandatory requirement does not apply in a few exceptional cases, to be assessed by the manager next level:
 - a. If a manager has completed a comparable leadership training program elsewhere (which is recorded in SuccessFactors on behalf of the higher level manager);
 - b. If a manager is offered an employment contract of six months or less.
- A managerial employee who refuses to take a mandatory leadership training program without prior consultation will not be promoted to other managerial positions.
- A manager evaluates their performance in the managerial role annually during their own performance review. For this purpose, the higher level manager requests 360-degree feedback in advance and discusses this in the annual performance review.
- Strategic activities may be part of the tasks at any management level, but responsibility for the entire area of Strategic Management rests with strategic and administrative management.
- At all levels, managers may serve in both hierarchical and functional leadership roles; this framework applies to both.
- Employees are assigned based on the responsibilities associated with their position/role. They may occasionally perform tasks that are classified to higher or lower levels, but their overall responsibility pertains to the assigned level.
- A novice manager may start as an operational or tactical manager. Strategic and administrative managerial managers are, in principle, always experienced managers.

To know more about management and leadership or comments on this framework:

Rolien Walinga, Management Development VU Amsterdam

b.r.walinga@vu.nl

Management Framework

Responsibilities	Level	Defining aspects of the role
- Manages employees and team. - Delegated (partly) responsible for people management.	1. Operational management	<i>Concerns novice (< 3 years of experience) to experienced managers (> 3 years of experience)</i> From content to managing employees
- Manages employees and team. - Integral team responsibility (management, appointment, finances). - Sometimes also manager of operational management.	2. Tactical management	<i>Concerns novice (< 3 years of experience) to experienced managers (> 3 years of experience)</i> From managing employees to integral management
- Manages tactical management. - Integrally responsible for multiple teams (e.g. section/department/training). - Contributes to the strategy of the faculty or division.	3. Strategic management	<i>Concerns experienced managers</i> From direct and integral management to indirect and strategic management
- Manages strategic management. - Integrally responsible for a unit (faculty/service). - Co-responsible for (long-term) strategy throughout the VU.	4. Administrative management	<i>Concerns experienced managers</i> From strategic management to executive management

1. Operational management

From content to managing employees

MANAGERIAL TASKS	LEADERSHIP	DEVELOPMENT
PEOPLE MANAGEMENT a. Guides and coaches employees in tasks and development. b. Takes responsibility for the well-being of employees by regularly asking about it with empathy and thinking along about solutions. c. Gives effective and constructive feedback to employees and regularly asks for feedback themselves. d. Can adapt leadership style to what the employee or the situation requires. e. Focuses on a good division of work between employees, assesses (team) performance and monitors workload. f. Promotes diversity and inclusion, stimulates social cohesion and ensures effective and stimulating collaboration in the team. g. Proactively monitors physical and social safety in the team. h. Performs basic employer tasks in the HR domain, which usually includes annual consultations and monitoring of illness leave.	ART OF ENGAGEMENT-applied ○ Shows exemplary role in Art of Engagement: 1. Contributes to the bigger picture 2. Is bold and decisive 3. Is clear and transparent 4. Listens and allows room for growth ○ Reflects openly on their own actions and strengths/weaknesses, asks for feedback and invests in their own development. ○ Is transparent about their own and other people's points for development.	MANDATORY TRAINING ACADEMIC STAFF Supervising PhD candidates Recognizing (social) safety MANDATORY TRAINING SUPPORT STAFF Leadership for service providers Recognizing (social) safety
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT Not in this role	POSITIONS AND ROLES <i>Cursive positions are not a formal UFO position but a VU-specific position or role.</i> ACADEMIC STAFF MANAGERS Senior lecturer 2; Lecturer 1, 2; Teacher 1, 2, 3; Researcher 1, 2, 3, 4; <i>team lead; chair of faculty examination board; project lead; co-supervisor of PhD candidates</i> SUPPORT STAFF MANAGERS Head of Department 4; Team leader 1, 2, 3, 4; Managing Coordinator 3, 4; <i>Substantive position with managerial aspect (including policy advisor; controller; project leader; IT consultant)</i>	FURTHER DEVELOPMENT Annual consultation for managers Effective dialogues (in Dutch only) Individual coaching Team coaching
PROCESS MANAGEMENT a. Carries out professional commissioning for projects. This means, among other things, communicating clearly about expectations, making timely decisions and good stakeholder management. b. Monitors the quality and timely result of all substantive processes and projects under their own responsibility. c. Keeps an eye on continuous improvement of processes and takes the initiative for innovation of the chain where relevant.		
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT Not in this role	-	CAREER STAGE ○ Managing employees directly. ○ Delegated (partly) responsible for people management. ○ Ranging from novice (1-3 years) to experienced managers (>3 years).

2. Tactical Management

From managing employees to integral management

MANAGERIAL TASKS	LEADERSHIP	DEVELOPMENT
PEOPLE MANAGEMENT a. Monitors careful and diverse recruitment and selection, actively focuses on diversity, inclusion and the application of the Collective Labour Agreement. b. Stimulates employees in their development and careers and focuses on the use of everyone's personal talents. c. Coaches and directs employees and teams in achieving performance in line with the strategy. d. Is a case manager in case of illness leave. e. Proactively invests in the social cohesion of the team and creates a natural learning environment. f. Makes clear decisions and proactively manages the division of tasks to clarify expectations and keep the workload healthy. g. Periodically carries out strategic personnel planning (including development plan) and applies succession management. h. Proactively informs employees about organizational developments and policies and everyone's responsibility in these.	ART OF ENGAGEMENT-toegepast ○ Shows exemplary role in Art of Engagement: 1. Contributes to the bigger picture 2. Is bold and decisive 3. Is clear and transparent 4. Listens and allows room for growth ○ Continuously develops own leadership qualities and takes responsibility for improving feedback points. ○ Invests in self-insight and in exemplary role by sharing about their own development and mistakes.	MANDATORY TRAINING ACADEMIC STAFF Leadership and Management skills Recognizing (social) safety MANDATORY TRAINING SUPPORT STAFF Leadership and Management skills Recognizing (social) safety
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT a. Carefully checks budgets of project plans. b. Actively and regularly manages budget spending and cost control. c. Thinks along about the budget of the department and critically questions those involved about planning and spending. d. Accounts for their own budget and implementation in the P&C cycle and reports on progress. e. Always applies the four-eyes principle (dual control) in financial management.	POSITIONS AND ROLES <i>Cursive positions are not a formal UFO position but a VU-specific position or role.</i> ACADEMIC STAFF MANAGERS Professor 1, 2; Senior Lecturer 1; <i>Head of department (with management of employees); section head; program director</i> SUPPORT STAFF MANAGERS Head of department 2, 3 <i>(with management of employees); Coordinator operations 1.2; Substantive position with managerial aspect (including policy officer; controller; project leader; ICT consultant)</i>	FURTHER DEVELOPMENT Annual consultation for managers Effective dialogues (in Dutch only) Mentorship (support staff) Mentorship (academic staff) Team coaching Intervention
PROCESS MANAGEMENT a. Performs professional commissioning for programs such as coordination of complex tasks, prioritization and communication. b. Monitors progress, improvement and reporting of projects and programs. c. Invests in their own digital knowledge and involves this in strategy, planning and process management. d. Monitors the safety of facilities (e.g. lab).	-	CAREER STAGE ○ Directly supervising employees (and sometimes also operational management). ○ Integral team responsibility. ○ Contributing to departmental strategy. ○ Ranging from novice (1-3 years) to experienced management (>3 years).
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT Not in this role.		

3. Strategic management

From direct and integral management to indirect and strategic management

MANAGERIAL TASKS	LEADERSHIP	DEVELOPMENT
PEOPLE MANAGEMENT a. Inspires teams to contribute to VU-wide and departmental goals with commitment, helps tactical management adjust them. b. Coaches tactical management and/or staff, facilitates difficult conversations, opens up discussions about conflicts, is a case manager in the event of illness leave, creates solutions. c. Sets priorities in the development plan with the team and monitors implementation. d. Has an eye for signals of unsafety, acts proactively and maintains measures for a safe climate. e. Monitors the implementation of strategic personnel planning, monitors coherence and connects conclusions to the department's annual plan and succession management.	ART OF ENGAGEMENT-toegepast - o Shows exemplary role in Art of Engagement: 1. Contributes to the bigger picture 2. Is bold and decisive 3. Is clear and transparent 4. Listens and allows room for growth - o Makes feedback a natural part of collaboration. - o Discusses areas for improvement in a constructive manner. - o Gives others confidence in their own choices and actions.	MANDATORY TRAINING ACADEMIC STAFF Leiderschap Next Level (in Dutch only) Recognizing (social) safety MANDATORY TRAINING SUPPORT STAFF Leiderschap Next Level (in Dutch only) Recognizing (social) safety
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT a. Draws up (multi-year) budget in the department's annual plan and focuses on coherence in sub-budgets. b. Translates the cost charging model into financial ambitions with regard to the budget of the faculty or division. c. Provides input for the budget of the faculty or division and follows implementation critically. d. Develops income generation, entrepreneurship and valorization and secures this in the department. e. Actively manages revenue realization, cost control and financial-administrative tasks.	POSITIONS AND ROLES <i>Cursive positions are not a formal UFO position but a VU-specific position or role.</i> ACADEMIC STAFF MANAGERS <i>Head of department (with management of other managers); Director of Education; Research Director; Education Institute Director; Research Institute Director.</i> SUPPORT STAFF MANAGERS Service Department Director 1, 2 (note, this is not UFO position policy director; and therefore not ultimately responsible service director); Head of department 1, 2 (with management of other managers).	FURTHER DEVELOPMENT Course Educational Leadership Effective dialogues (in Dutch only) Mentorship (support staff) Mentorship (academic staff) Team coaching Intervention
PROCESS MANAGEMENT a. Monitors progress, quality and development of projects/programmes. b. Invests in their own digital knowledge and applies it to work processes and professional content in their own department. c. Manages, secures and monitors the safety of facilities (e.g. lab).		
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT a. Proactively formulates, implements and monitors the long-term perspective, includes departments in organizational changes, draws up a departmental annual plan in line with the strategy and monitors implementation. b. Manages the broader picture delegates authorities. c. Represents the department externally, represents the interests of the group and invests in VU-wide networks. d. Focuses on strategic external partnerships.	-	CAREER STAGE - o Directly and indirectly leading tactical management. - o Integrally responsible for a department or section. - o Contributing to the strategy of their own faculty or division. - o Experienced manager (>4 years).

4. Administrative management

From strategic management to executive management

MANAGERIAL TASKS	LEADERSHIP	DEVELOPMENT
PEOPLE MANAGEMENT a. Strategically steers towards a diverse and sustainable staffing. b. Coaches strategic management in the development of their personal talent and proactive management of this among their own employees. c. Ensures a physically and socially safe climate, has an eye for signals of unsafety and work pressure and acts proactively. d. Ensures effective and motivating cooperation. Invests in community building, visibility and exemplary behaviour. e. Applies their own vision, but does not do everything themselves, knows how to delegate in time. f. Mediates in difficult conversations, asks for professional support in a timely manner where relevant.	ART OF ENGAGEMENT ○ Shows exemplary role in Art of Engagement: 1. Contributes to the bigger picture 2. Is bold and decisive 3. Is clear and transparent 4. Listens and allows room for growth ○ Always develops their own leadership. ○ Shares their own development and mistakes, steps over their own shadow. ○ Creates a safe culture of accountability. ○ Commits themselves to decisions taken and loyally propagates them.	MANDATORY TRAINING ACADEMIC STAFF Meesterschap in besturen (in Dutch only) Recognizing (social) safety MANDATORY TRAINING SUPPORT STAFF Meesterschap in besturen (in Dutch only) Recognizing (social) safety
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT a. Adopts the budget of the faculty or division including investments and takes accountability for its implementation. b. Actively directs strategic management on income generation, entrepreneurship and valorization and safeguards this for employees. c. Monitors an explainable distribution of resources in one's own faculty or division. d. Monitors the progress of the realization in the meantime, connects short-term and long-term forecasts and realization. e. Helps determine VU-wide investment and resource distribution and critically monitors progress and realization.	POSITIONS AND ROLES <i>Cursive positions are not a formal UFO position but a VU-specific position or role.</i> ACADEMIC STAFF MANAGERS Dean 1, 2; <i>Portfolio holder Research; Portfolio holder Education; Portfolio holder Impact</i> SUPPORT STAFF MANAGERS Policy Director 1; Secretary to the Executive Board; Managing Director 1, 2, 3	FURTHER DEVELOPMENT Administrative leadership UNL (deans) Executive coaching Effective dialogues (in Dutch only) Mentorship (support staff) Mentorship (academic staff) Team coaching Intervention
PROCESS MANAGEMENT a. Represents faculty or division in programmes, monitors progress and decision-making in line with the agreed course. b. Translates digital developments into their own strategy, challenges strategic management to develop application in work processes.		
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT a. Translates relevant external and internal developments into the strategy of the faculty or division, in line with the VU strategy and achieves support. b. Proactively contributes to the strategy of VU Amsterdam. c. Focuses on quality policy for their own area of responsibility, stimulates interdisciplinary cooperation and monitors progress. d. Invests in effective administrative relationships with employee participation and other administrative consultations. e. Inspires employees to proactively contribute to vision and strategy. f. Represents the faculty or division externally.	-	CAREER STAGE ○ Directly and indirectly leading strategic management. ○ Integrally responsible for faculty or division. ○ Co-responsible VU-wide for long-term strategy. ○ Experienced manager (>4 years) to very experienced manager (>8 years for dean)