

## Distributed Leadership

As a member of the West Chester University community, you will be important to the process we call Distributed Leadership. Distributed Leadership is an attitude rather than a management technique. It means seeing all members of the faculty and staff as experts in their own right – as uniquely important sources of knowledge, experience, and wisdom. Above all, the approach allows the University's vision for the future to be shared and implemented across the campus.

Under Distributed Leadership, everyone is responsible and accountable for leadership within his or her area. Good ideas come from throughout the University, and many people cooperate in creating change. With ramifications in virtually all areas of campus life, Distributed Leadership is an environment where everyone feels free to develop and share new ideas.

A central goal of the approach is for individuals to succeed in a climate of shared purpose, teamwork, and respect – an atmosphere in which we can reach out to help one another and feel free to turn to ask for help. In other words, Distributed Leadership supports and strengthens already outstanding individuals.

As you enter into the daily life of the University, you will have many opportunities to learn and practice the principles of Distributed Leadership:

1. Distributed Leadership does not mean delegating. Instead, it means finding the best path by tapping the expertise, ideas, and effort of everyone involved.
2. Distributed Leadership brings success in handling problems, threats, and change. It not only encourages idea sharing; it demands it. Good ideas can come to fruition because a team is ready to ignite the process moving from concept to reality.
3. "The way we've always done things" isn't necessarily the best way. Using Distributed Leadership, we can look for better ways and test them through controlled, reasoned risk taking.
4. In a Distributed Leadership environment, mistakes often lead to discovering valuable new approaches.
5. In Distributed Leadership, not everyone is a decision-maker, but everyone is an expert whose knowledge contributes to the decision-making process.
6. Distributed Leadership is not for mavericks and lone eagles.
7. Distributed Leadership is about cooperation and trust, not about competition among units and factions. We all share the same mission, even though we contribute to it in different ways.

8. Distributed Leadership empowers everyone to make his or her job more efficient, meaningful, and effective.

9. Under Distributed Leadership, everybody matters.