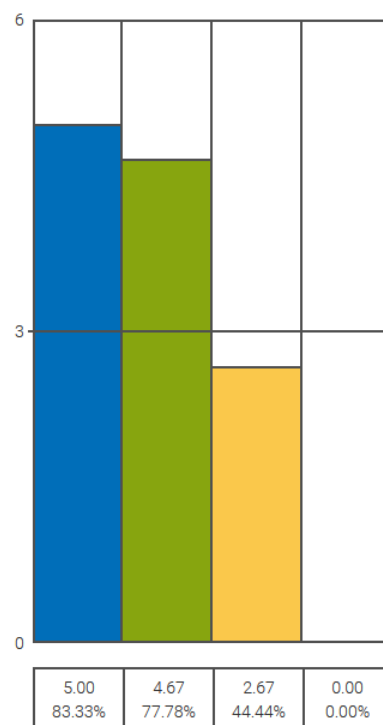


Values-based leadership in business innovation.

At the beginning of the course, I saw leadership more as managing, where the team leader took the role, of making sure all goes well. I believe that one of my learning points at the beginning was to be such a person and find out what traits and skills that person has. Only I can confidently say that is not what I have learned during this course, and I am rather happy that this course offered greater insights.

In my eyes, leadership is much more than only standing there in front of the room and taking responsibility for the choices you and your team made. Leadership really can be from the bottom up, where you take your values as a basis and act in such a way. The iceberg model presented at the beginning of the course is a great example of it. Only when it returned, did I fully understand why it is such a simple, but good model. Especially when a business/ team must make hard choices.



In the end, one of the greatest pitfalls of me is to think of solutions. Thinking about solutions and making sure your decision is nice and weighted is a great value, yet on the other hand, you have the pitfall of overthinking. Then we continued to do what we all are good at, which is being a designer and overthinking the solution. This is especially evident in the first assignment, where we focussed on the solution, rather than delivering a convincing story. The tension plot in my eyes is a great tool to get insights into how values create tension in a certain situation. It helps on the one hand in getting straight what the real problem is, and on the other hand, contributes to telling a real convincing story. I will certainly use this plot in my future career, as it aligns with how I work and what I believe.

During this course, me and my group (all sharing the same qualities) have learned to deal with this and have come to a great balance. On one hand, we took the joy out of thinking about a solution for the cases whilst also taking leadership attributes into account. On the other hand, we started focussing on values from ours, stakeholders, and the case holders (company). The development of our group did align with the team effectiveness models shown in the lecture, especially the Tuckman model. There might be a truth in team bonding exercises setting a foundation for this, honestly, I have experienced that in our team this holds.

On a more personal level, I think that during this course I took several roles within the team. Our team dynamics shifted throughout every case, and we took notice of that. Of course, this was a bit set up, but by experiencing different team roles I learned to understand how a specific lens leads to other results, showing the importance of different roles in a team. This helped me with my learning goals to not push myself into the background and tackle my modesty. Before we even started working, I already shared my view on how I thought we should approach the case, which meant that I had stepped out of my comfort zone. In our group we all shared our views, then evaluated before starting, again this shows that indirectly I tend to work more as a democratic leader. I enjoyed working on cases from real-life stakeholders, besides the challenge it provided me with a better understanding of how companies, businesses and teams in those businesses operate.

I have learned a great deal about leadership and how it plays a pivotal role in companies, teams etc. especially when a company wants to change/innovate. There are different levels on which you can apply leadership. I believe that you as a designer can be a great leader, as in my eyes they tend to look across and in between the lines, applying a designerly approach to tasks. I think for me this also holds, and the lessons learned from this course are great in setting the first steps into 'becoming'/'convincing' why you can lead innovation.

There are several key values I continue to hold dear for me as a designer, and maybe as a future leader, which are honesty, respect and kindness. I think that my laid-back approach is a nice one when it comes to leadership, finding balance in giving others a feeling of value and presenting your values and ideas. The cases were a great vehicle for this, presenting complex situations, where we as a group in essence had to find this balance.

In my identity, I always state that my modesty enables me to connect with others, acknowledge their expertise and through that work together to create real value. Leading a multidisciplinary team has always been something I wanted to do. Though this course taught me not to manage, I now understand better how such a team can be led. Giving me more assurance that there might be a moment in time when I can do that either. However, I believe there is still a long road ahead of me, starting with building confidence and finding balance in my modesty (although not always bad). In future courses and my later professional life, I will try to recognise when I step into a leadership role, and think about how I operate.

The iceberg model is something that I will hold dear, especially for leadership, that with your values you can steer and shape the direction of teams, organisations, startups etc. However, you

should make this presentable and show a line of reason through your values. You as a designer/leader can approach problems from different views, find values vocalize them, and create a way to act according to these values, and that is the type of leader I want to be.