

SUSSEX 2025

The Sussex Leader

KINDNESS
INTEGRITY
INCLUSION
COLLABORATION
COURAGE

A BETTER
UNIVERSITY
FOR A BETTER
WORLD

The Sussex Leader

The University has a clear vision in Sussex 2025. Our seven year framework heralds changes in our culture and the values we want our community to aspire to and embody.

This document defines the behaviours and competencies expected of leaders at the University of Sussex.

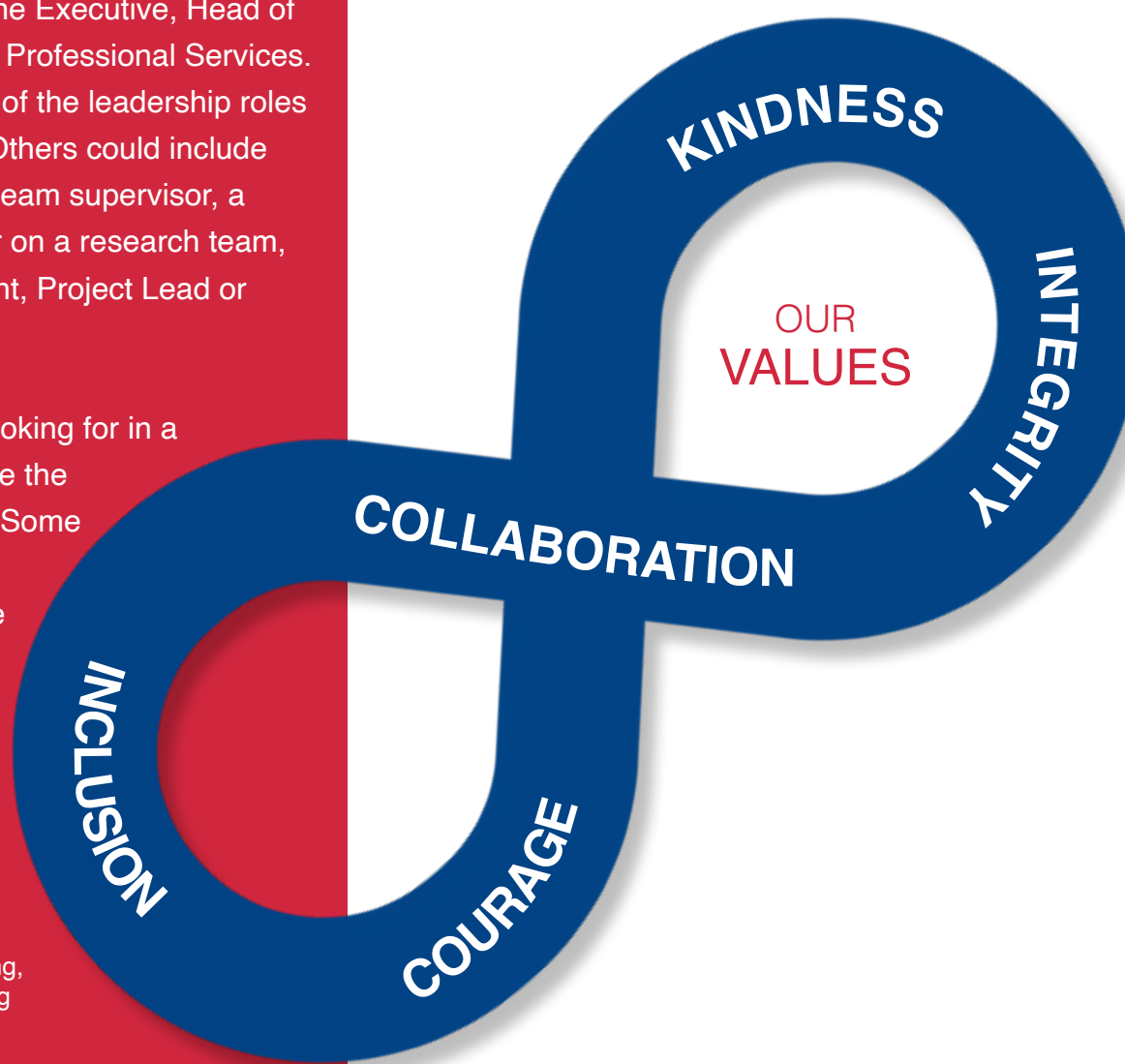
It addresses what it takes to be a Sussex Leader and is designed to be a reference document rather than a contractual tool.

There are lots of different ways to be a leader at Sussex. You don't have to be the VC, member of the Executive, Head of School or Director of Professional Services. Those are just a few of the leadership roles in the organisation. Others could include being a manager or team supervisor, a Principal Investigator on a research team, a Head of Department, Project Lead or Business Partner.

The values we are looking for in a Sussex Leader will be the same for all leaders. Some of the competencies defined may be more pertinent to senior leaders, others will be relevant to leaders throughout the organisation.

Infinity Symbol

A process, that is ongoing, that integrates everything into the flow.



The Sussex Leader

VALUES

KINDNESS

Respectful

The Sussex Leader doesn't insult or make fun of people, doesn't talk about people behind their backs, and doesn't ascribe blame. They maintain confidences.

Listens

They are not merely present but really listen to colleagues and students, at all levels of the organisation. They seek to understand, as well as to be understood.

Empathises with others

They hold difficult conversations with compassion, dignity and respect. They demonstrate a real commitment to support staff, promote and develop their well-being and achieve their personal best.



The Sussex Leader

VALUES

INTEGRITY

Authentic

The Sussex Leader keeps to commitments made, even if it takes extra effort. They speak up if they disagree with something – never nodding as an item is discussed and agreed, whilst having no intention of following up with action. Their behaviour is consistent with the University's values.

Honest

They embody the highest standards of behaviour. They are consistent and straightforward in their approach.

Takes responsibility

They are reflective, taking responsibility for their own actions, and never allowing someone else to take the blame for their mistakes.

The Sussex Leader

VALUES

INCLUSION

Appreciative of diversity

The Sussex Leader complies with Equality and Diversity policies, of course, but they go well beyond that basic requirement. They challenge behaviour which threatens a positive climate. They genuinely appreciate and seek out diversity, recognising that their work will benefit from a variety of approaches and views.

Encourages meaningful participation

They seek to involve people with different viewpoints or experiences. They are aware of unconscious bias, and seek to avoid “group think” in the way they seek participation.

Displays emotional intelligence

They adopt a nuanced approach in their interactions with others and are able to adapt their style as appropriate to get the best out of others.

The Sussex Leader

VALUES

COLLABORATION

Connected

The Sussex Leader looks for opportunities to collaborate. They are well-connected and act as a catalyst for groups to come together. They use groups, such as the University Leadership Team, as an opportunity to pick up and share ideas, to network and to participate in wider decision-making. They collaborate inside and outside of the University. They also typically work in a number of different teams (for example a team of peers, the University Leadership Team, and/or a departmental team).

Takes individual accountability

They lead from the front, taking responsibility for the team but are quick to share praise when things go well.

Consultative leadership

They invest time in building strong relationships. They can see the bigger picture and find ways of balancing the demands of different parties.

The Sussex Leader

VALUES

COURAGE

Personal power

The Sussex Leader influences and persuades people by virtue of their ability to inspire, to build strong, trusting relationships and to lead by example. They don't rely on their position in the hierarchy to make things happen.

Visible

They are present, and actively participate in team events, committees etc. They are also available informally.

Risk-taking, experimental

They accept that things won't always work. They don't look to blame, but to learn from the experience, and are quick to stop doing whatever doesn't work and to move onto something else. They are curious and provide constructive challenge.

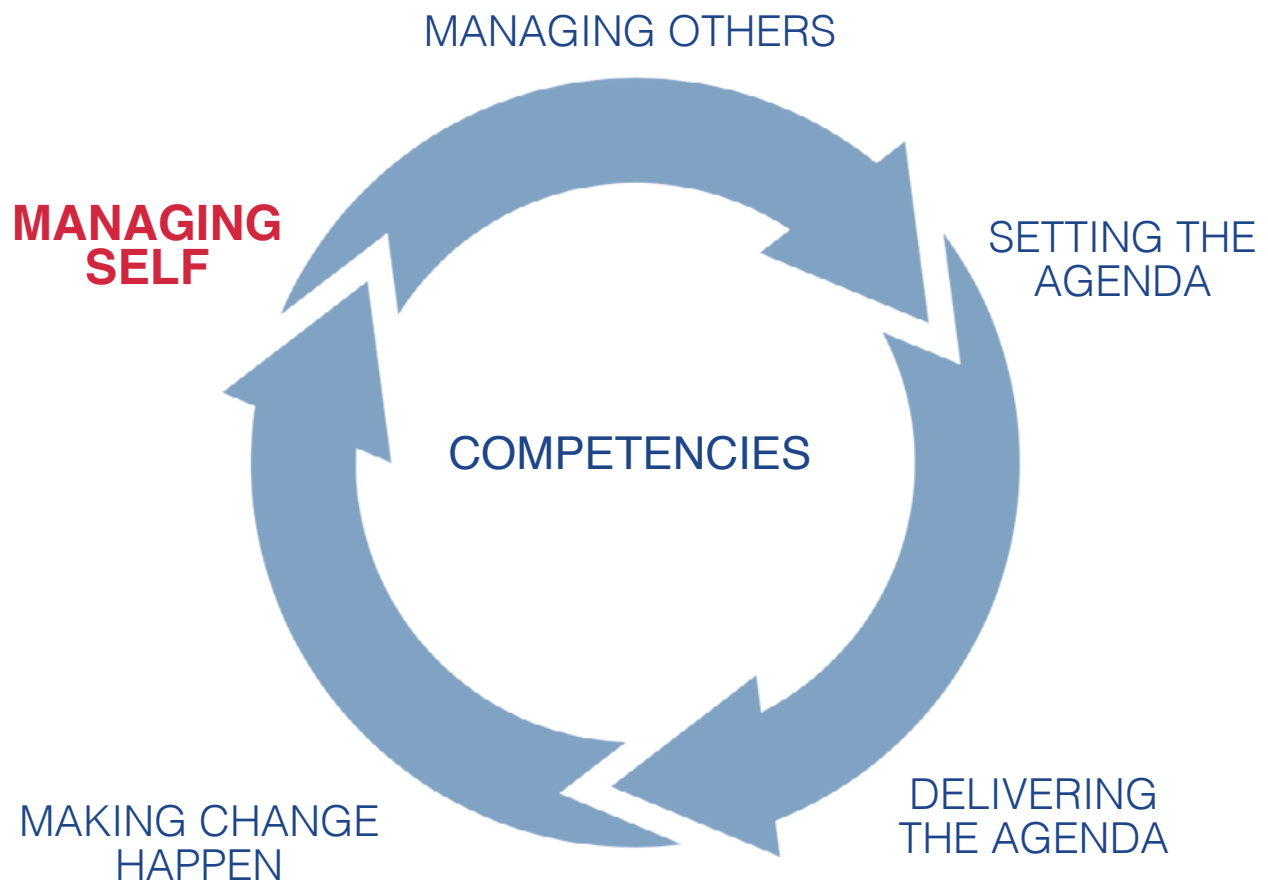
Pioneering and open-minded

They are open to new and different ways of doing things. They recognise that some things are only the way they are because no-one has ever had the courage to modernise, and that finding new ways of working is important in an increasingly competitive environment.

Engages with difficult issues

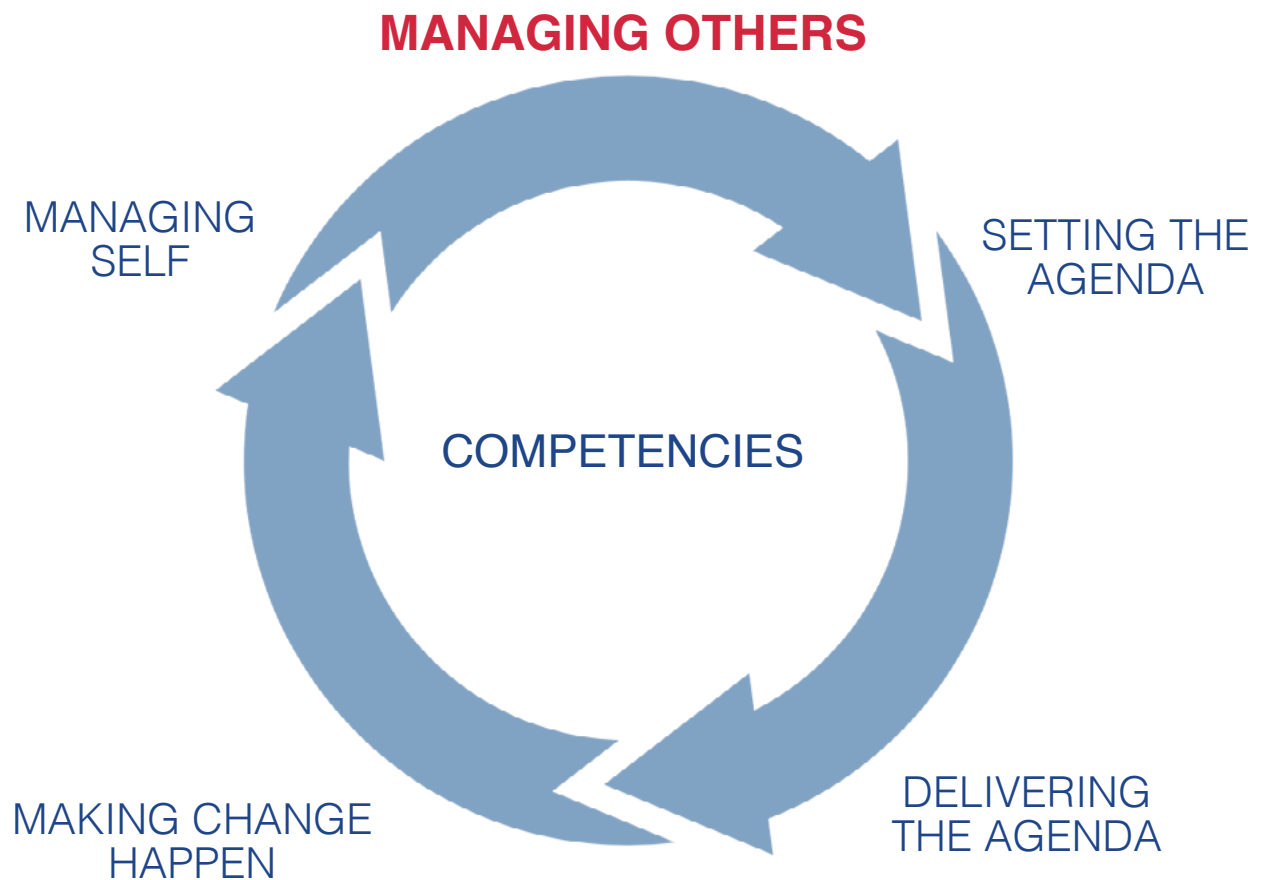
They speak up when they see things which are not right, in their view. They take action when it needs to be taken, however challenging. They speak truth to power, in all its forms.

The Sussex Leader **COMPETENCIES**



MANAGING SELF

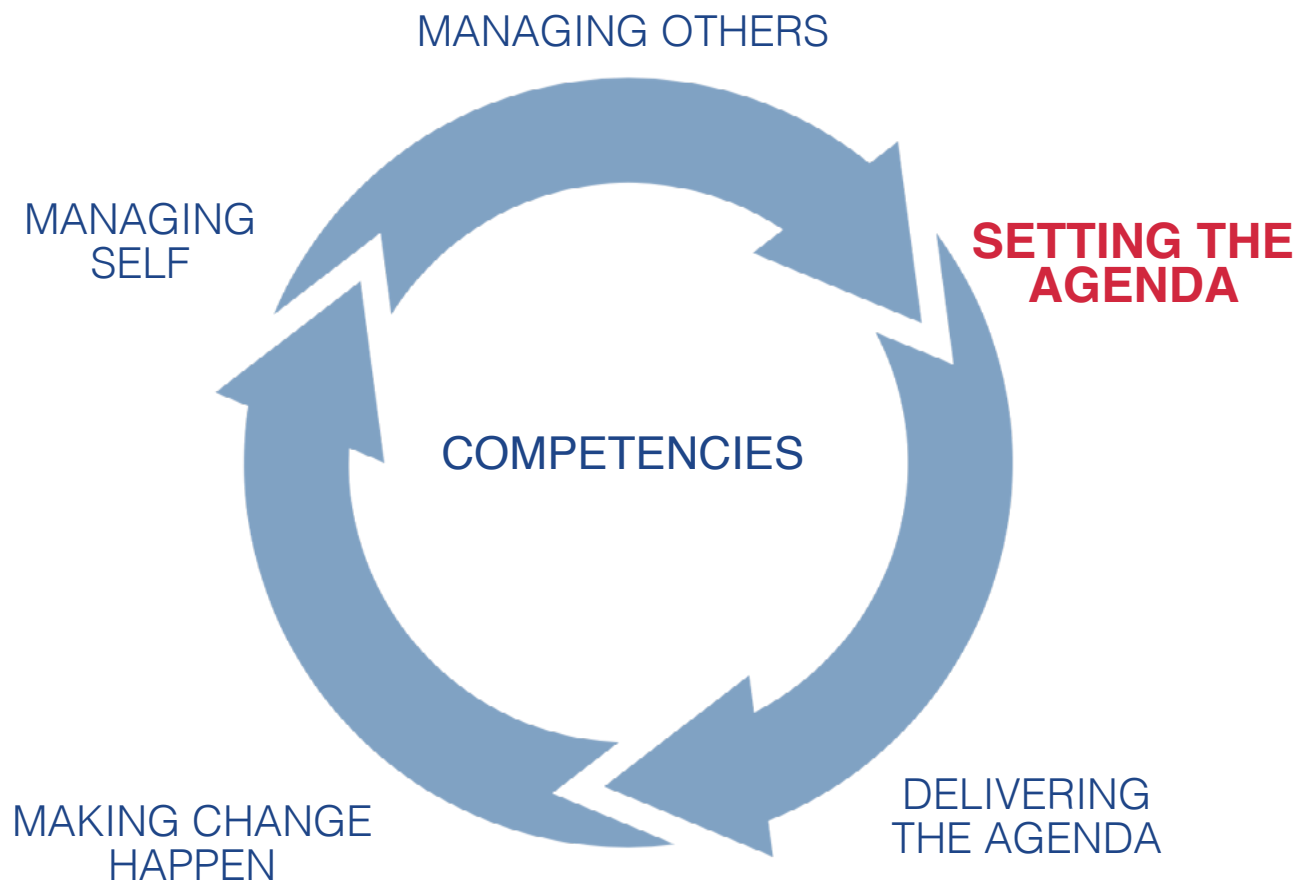
- Is self-aware, and aware of their impact on others
- Exercises good judgement and decision-making
- Overcomes politics to focus on what is important and needs to be delivered
- Is tenacious and persistent
- Sees what is possible and responds positively and judiciously to challenge
- Has a passion for excellence that inspires others, and adapts her/his style to meet the demands of different situations and audiences
- Understands the importance of personal resilience and sets a good example in respect of managing work-life balance.



MANAGING OTHERS

- Communicates well and keeps their team up to date
- Supports colleagues to achieve their personal best
- Actively addresses underperformance
- Takes the time to review team effectiveness, celebrate achievements, and have open discussions about how things might be improved
- Draws on the full range of talents within their team to maximise the team's overall performance.

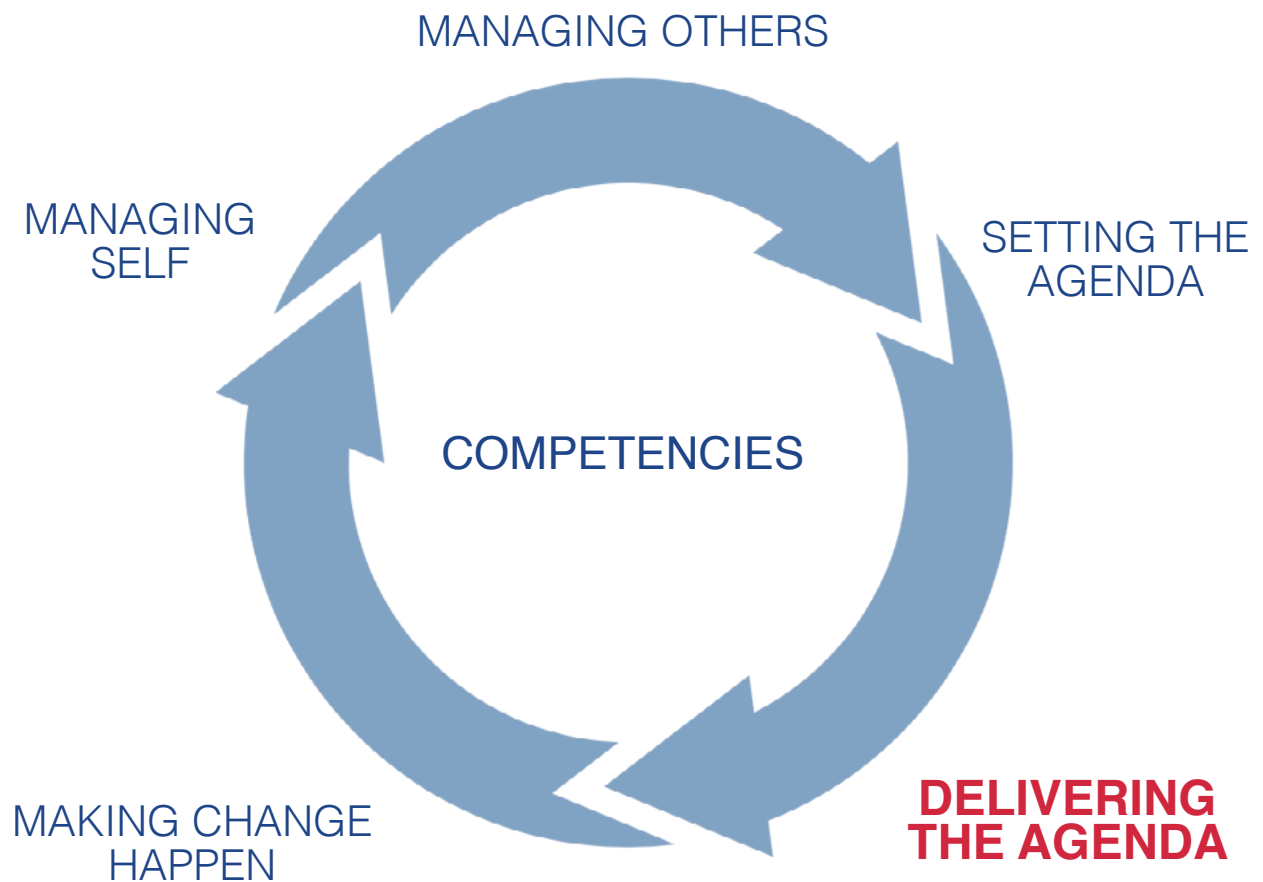
The Sussex Leader **COMPETENCIES**



SETTING THE AGENDA

- Uses a variety of sources internally and externally to keep abreast of trends, and makes use of this knowledge for the benefit of the University
- Analyses facts and figures to spot the key factors shaping the way forward
- Contributes to the shaping of the institution's strategy
- Develops and articulates the strategy for their area of responsibility.

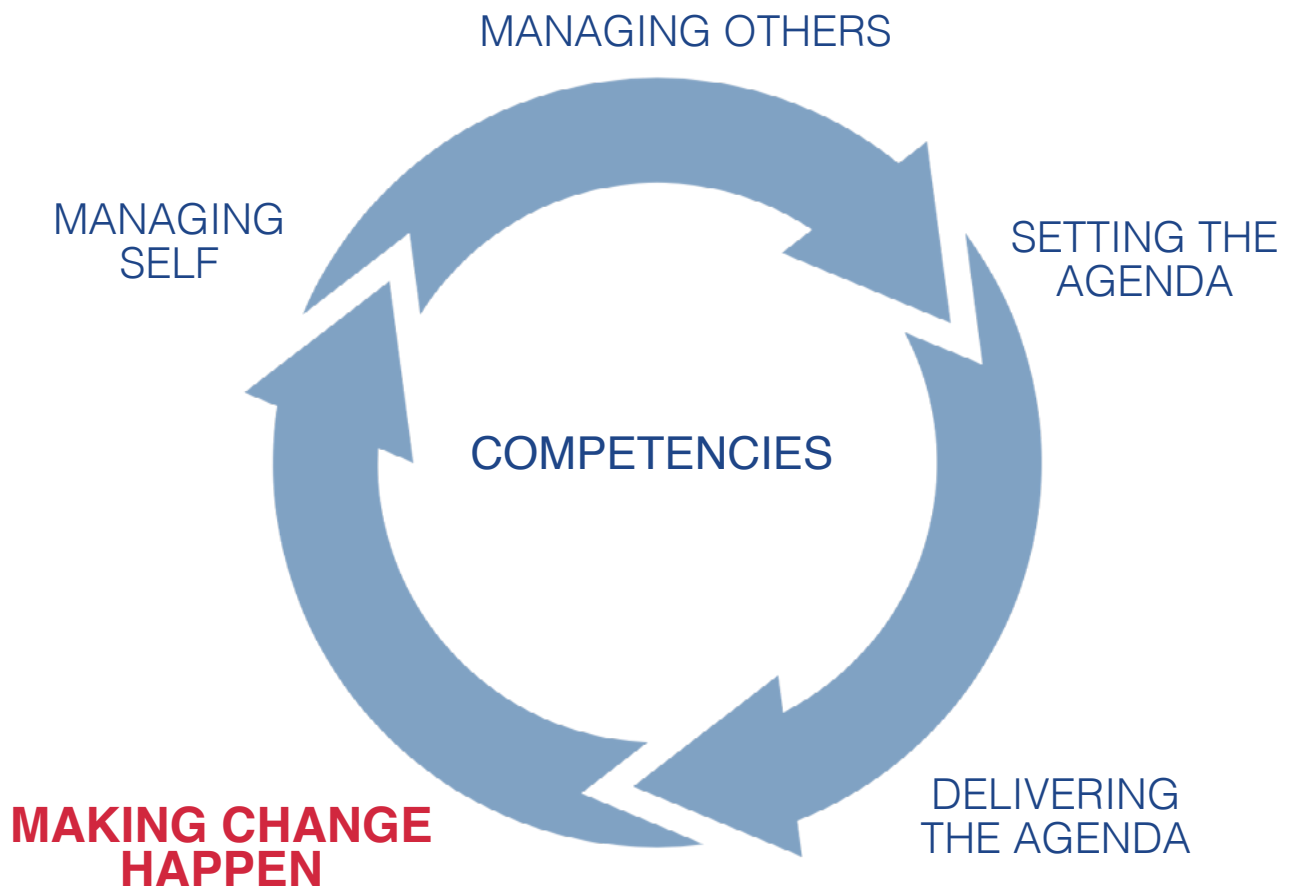
The Sussex Leader **COMPETENCIES**



DELIVERING THE AGENDA

- Is comfortable balancing strategic contribution with operational delivery
- Leads by example, enthusing others with their passion for our work
- Makes timely decisions by addressing opportunities and problems promptly; things are not allowed to drift
- Deals sensitively with potential conflict when difficult decisions need to be made
- Works collaboratively with colleagues to build strong partnerships and involve all stakeholders in delivery of the agenda.

The Sussex Leader **COMPETENCIES**



MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN

- Encourages others to explore new and better ways of doing things
- Challenges current working practices to identify new ideas and ways to improve things
- Challenges any bureaucracy that constrains pace and our ability to make things happen
- Maintains a focus on the implementation of change to see it through and make sure it happens
- Recognises what can realistically be achieved and uses their influence to avoid unnecessary or ill-timed change.