

Creating the Link Between Learning and Innovation

Leadership Principles

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“The purpose of leaders used to be to distribute power and resources to drive optimization. Today, it’s a leader’s job to listen, to coach, to nurture and help continue to push decision making to the teams actually doing the work.”

JIM KEANE | Former President and CEO

The Munich Learning and Innovation Center (LINC) serves as a hub for EMEA leadership, making them accessible to each other, their teams and visiting customers. By bringing EMEA leaders together in one facility and making them accessible for impromptu conversations with employees and visiting customers, they are able to stay connected and current. It also helps build the trust that’s so crucial for a truly agile organization.

Progressive ideas about the role of leaders are a key dimension of Steelcase’s evolving culture.

Instead of leaders being top decision-makers who work in secluded private offices, former CEO Jim Keane champions the concept of leaders serving as curators of the environment – listening to the pulse of the organization, seeing opportunities and empowering employees.

The leadership team is centrally positioned in an open plan space, near the WorkCafé, where they are visible and accessible to employees and visitors.

LEADERSHIP GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Based on their explorations, the leadership experience team synthesized these principles to help inform the design of the new LINC workplace:

Immerse leaders in the daily flow

Position the leadership community in a central thoroughfare of the organization, intentionally near the innovation teams.

Integrate the executive team

Leverage the leadership space to welcome visitors and to shape and communicate the brand. Encourage serendipitous encounters with employees and customers.

Encourage leaders to continually re-energize and engage their teams

Include a feedback loop, allowing leaders to monitor their impact on engagement.
Cultivate an environment where people are empowered to make decisions.

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