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Annette Lorentsen (born 1952) is professor in organizational and pedagogical change in educational institutions. Since 2006 head of the interfaculty Department of Education, Learning and Philosophy at Aalborg University, Denmark, a university well known for its PBL model and for its very strong interrelation with the region, with business and industry and with the surrounding society as such. As part of the European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU) Aalborg University tries to create a modern university that is able and ready to meet future challenges of universities. She has done research on e-learning, distance education, flexible master programs, language learning in an intercultural perspective, staff development etc.



Reaching for the Stars

Reflections on institutional quality strategies and practices in a top-down bottom-up perspective

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Abstract

Universities today have to implement and maintain a quality culture. However, this is in many ways both a truism and a contradiction in terms. Universities are dedicated to delivering excellence and therefore quality is an integral part of universities, but at the same time universities are characterized by so big differences across disciplines and units that talking about one quality culture instead of several, perhaps indeed almost individual, quality cultures is at least a challenge. However, modern universities do need shared values and goals to be successful in handling scarce resources, external accountability, raising external funding etc. On the other hand commitment to a quality culture will never be a reality, if not an appropriate mix of top-down and bottom-up activities be created. This paper discusses with examples from European universities what such a mix might look like, in the end stressing the importance of human resource development in order to be successful.