

# Essential Leadership Skills

Transform supervisors and managers into leaders and coaches. This powerful five-part program develops the skills that leaders need for today's business climate. Participants will learn how to support ambitious change efforts, address poor performers, develop employees using developmental feedback, and improve the organization's overall culture.

## Benefits

Participants will gain the knowledge required to:

- Reduce stress associated with the shift to leading others
- Act with authenticity to build trust
- Impact business outcomes by leading effectively
- Effectively resolve workplace conflict and enhance productivity, efficiency and morale
- Build the team's capabilities and capacity through developmental delegations
- Encourage people to take ownership of, and be accountable for, their work performance
- Make the best use of available resources

## Who Should Attend

Anyone in a frontline or mid-level leadership position.

## Course Details

In this course, participants focus on one topic in each of the five sessions that occur one day a week for five continuous weeks.

## SESSION 1: YOUR LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

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Making the transition from individual contributor to leader is both exciting and challenging. Unfortunately, we often promote individuals based on their hard work, and they struggle because being a leader is a career change, not just a slight shift in the work they do. This course arms a new or prospective leader with the knowledge and skills they need to confront the challenges they face early in their leader career. The course encourages the learner to think about the transitions that newer leaders face and how to handle those challenges. They are introduced to three leadership differentiators that are most important to building a positive reputation as well as contributing to the organization's success.

## SESSION OVERVIEW

**Leadership Transitions:** In a group activity, learners identify actions they said they would "always do" and "never do" as a leader. Learners talk about the stresses of being a new leader and some of the challenges they have had in their new role.

**What's Important?:** A video shows a new leader struggling with all of the things that compete for her attention. Learners take time to reflect on the many priorities in their role and use a checklist to determine things they still need to find out from others. Through a group activity, participants learn the value of seeing their team's work from three perspectives: balcony, treetop, and helicopter.

**Be Authentic:** Facilitator introduces the Leadership Differentiators and divides learners into three groups. Each group prepares a presentation around their assigned Leadership Differentiator. The first group presents the Be Authentic differentiator. Teams discuss how they would handle a situation that requires authenticity and share their ideas with the rest of the learners.

**Bring Out the Best in People:** The second group does its presentation on the Bring Out the Best in People differentiator. Mock interviews are conducted in pairs to help learners discover how a leader can uncover a team member's skills and motivations. Learners record commitments for long- and short-term success.

**Be Receptive to Feedback:** The third group presents the Be Receptive to Feedback differentiator. A two-part video activity shows how a leader reacts to ineffective and effective feedback and a group discussion follows. In pairs, learners discuss past feedback they have received that was difficult to hear but was helpful. The facilitator provides tips for collecting feedback.

**What Will People Say?:** Participants discuss challenges and best practices of leading former peers. They work on a long-term goal they would like to accomplish and decide which Leadership Differentiator will help them achieve that goal.

## SESSION 2: COMMUNICATING FOR LEADERSHIP SUCCESS

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Organizations need leaders who can do more and be more in order to succeed in today's complex environment. They need frontline leaders with strong interpersonal skills who can get things done by mobilizing and engaging others. This foundation course for most Interaction Management® courses helps leaders communicate effectively so they can spark action in others. The course teaches leaders the Interaction Essentials they need to handle the variety of challenges and opportunities they encounter every day in the workplace and beyond.

## SESSION OVERVIEW

**Leadership Today (and Every Day):** Working in teams, learners conduct the discussion they read about in the Course Prep. Participants watch a video that shows the variety of demands a leader faces, and the facilitator highlights the importance of meeting team members' needs. Facilitator leads an activity to introduce personal and practical needs, and then introduces the Interaction Essentials.

**Key Principles to Meet Personal Needs:** Facilitator introduces the Support Key Principle. Working in teams, learners discover key insights about the Esteem, Empathy, or Involvement Key Principle and teach their assigned Key Principle to the rest of the group. The facilitator introduces the Share Key

Principle and leads a discussion about the benefits of using these skills in the workplace.

**Working to Meet Personal Needs:** Participants watch two video segments that show a manager using Key Principles. Facilitator leads the group as they read several situations and choose an effective response for each one. Working in pairs, learners read additional situations and write an effective response for each one.

**Up Close and Personal:** Working with a partner, learners take turns responding to statements "on the spot" using the Key Principles. Learners graph the results of their self-assessment and identify actions they will take to address any challenges they might encounter in using the Key Principles effectively.

**Practically Speaking:** Facilitator overviews the Interaction Guidelines to meet practical needs. Participants watch a video leader effectively use these skills during a discussion with a team member. Learners begin to complete a Discussion Planner for an upcoming workplace discussion.

**Using Effective Feedback for Leadership Success:** Facilitator leads a discussion about the nature of feedback in the learners' environment. Facilitator introduces the STAR approach to providing positive and developmental feedback. Participants practice by writing a STAR and delivering it to a fellow participant.

**Wrap-Up:** Teams prepare and present a brief presentation of five specifics for the assigned concept learned in the course, including its business impact.

## SESSION 3: COACHING FOR PEAK PERFORMANCE

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Effective coaching is one of the most important drivers of team member performance. Whether leaders are guiding people toward success in new or challenging situations or helping people improve or enhance their work performance, their ability to coach and provide feedback makes the difference between mediocrity and high performance. By helping learners understand the importance of three coaching techniques and how to effectively handle both proactive and reactive coaching discussions, this course helps leaders have more effective and efficient interactions.

### SESSION OVERVIEW

**What Is Coaching?:** Facilitator shares the definition and characteristics of both proactive and reactive coaching. Learners are divided into two teams to debate the impact of each type of coaching on people, productivity, and profitability. After reviewing the three types of coaching and thinking about where they spend most of their time, participants identify and record their own coaching situations.

**Interaction Essentials and Coaching Techniques:** Learners engage in a competitive quiz on their knowledge and understanding of the Interaction Essentials in the context of proactive and reactive coaching. They learn about and explore the coaching techniques in more depth by rotating through three self-discovery learning stations.

**Case Study Coaching Situations:** A case study is introduced in which a leader is preparing for two different coaching situations—one proactive and the other reactive. Participants watch a video of a leader conducting a proactive coaching situation and provide the leader with STAR feedback. Learners provide advice to the same leader, who is now preparing for a reactive coaching discussion. Participants watch the leader use the skills and then provide feedback.

**Skill Practice:** Learners prepare for and conduct three rounds of skill practice using their own coaching situations.

**Closing Reflections:** Working individually, participants reflect on how they will apply what they have learned on the job and outside of the workplace. Learners share their responses with the large group, and the facilitator highlights any patterns that emerge.

## SESSION 4: RESOLVING WORKPLACE CONFLICT

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Today's business environment challenges organizations to increase productivity, improve quality, shorten cycle time, and reduce costs. An unfortunate but natural byproduct of these challenges is conflict. While conflict can lead to discoveries such as new ideas and innovative breakthroughs, it can, if allowed to escalate, result in damage to critical working relationships. This course teaches leaders how to recognize the signs of escalating conflict and take appropriate action to minimize damage. Leaders are introduced to two resolution tactics—coach and mediate—and practice using the Interaction Essentials as they coach then mediate to resolve a conflict.

### SESSION OVERVIEW

**Accountability and Conflict:** Facilitator introduces the course and leads a discussion of the stages of conflict. Learners build the Accountability Matrix, a construct that identifies behaviors that help leaders to either facilitate or enable conflict, and employees to either take ownership or avoid resolution of conflict. Learners reflect on a series of questions about how well they facilitate conflict resolution.

**Coaching to Meet Personal Needs:** Facilitator explains when to coach an employee and when to step in and mediate. The role of the Key Principles, especially Empathy and Involvement, in addressing people's personal needs during conflict is emphasized. Learners watch a video leader who defuses emotions and meets the personal needs of an employee who is involved in a conflict. Learners discuss how asking powerful, open-ended questions can involve people and strengthen their commitment to resolving conflict.

**Coaching to Meet Practical Needs:** Facilitator leads a discussion on how the Interaction Guidelines can help leaders work through people's practical needs in conflict discussions. Learners watch the leader from the previous video as she coaches her employee to resolve the conflict.

**Coaching Skill Practice:** Participants conduct two prepared skill practices using the coaching resolution tactic.

**Mediating Toward a Common Goal:** Participants discuss the difference between coaching and mediating and are given a list of tips for a successful mediation. They then conduct a prepared mediating skill practice where two partners play the role of the people in conflict.

**Session Close:** Learners reflect on their course experience and how they can use the skills and techniques to successfully resolve conflict back in the workplace.

## SESSION 5: DELEGATING WITH PURPOSE

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Delegation is a critical skill for leaders in today's "do more with less" business environment. Fewer resources, changing motivations, virtual employees, and global workforces are just a few of the challenges leaders face as they attempt to meet ever-increasing workplace demands. In this course, leaders learn the skills they need to address these challenges, gain the commitment of team members,

develop individual skills and abilities, and enhance the overall capability and capacity of their teams and, ultimately, the organization. Leaders learn to identify the tasks they need to delegate, select the most appropriate individuals, assess capabilities and commitment, and plan the delegation discussion. That discussion includes the level of decision-making authority, amount of support, and methods for monitoring progress and measuring results.

## SESSION OVERVIEW

**Why Delegate, What, and to Whom?** Learners describe what team members think, feel, and say when their leader doesn't delegate effectively. Facilitator explains what delegating with purpose involves and asks learners how they react when their leader delegates in this way. Learners share their delegation opportunities, match people to the tasks, and then identify challenges to delegating and tactics they could use to overcome them.

**Planning Your Strategy:** Learners watch a case study video of two delegation candidates and then divide into teams to consider the pros and cons of delegating to each candidate. They watch a video showing the leader's rationale for the person he chose. Learners divide into four teams and use the delegation Planning Points to consider how to approach a delegation based on the person's needs and concerns.

**Communicating Your Strategy:** Facilitator leads a discussion on how the Interaction Essentials and Discussion Planner help leaders plan for and meet employees' personal and practical needs in a delegation situation.

**Planning Your Delegation: Peer Coaching:** Facilitator provides an overview of peer coaching. Learners plan their own delegation strategy using a Discussion Planner and in pairs share their strategy and provide coaching to each other. Facilitator debriefs the activity and leads a discussion of delegating virtually.

**A Positive Model:** Learners watch a leader using the Interaction Guidelines and Key Principles as he conducts a delegation discussion with an employee.

**Ongoing Follow-up and Coaching:** Facilitator leads a discussion about applying techniques to monitor progress, measure results, and provide ongoing coaching and support. Participants review the tips and techniques of seeking rather than telling, readjusting the initial plan, and using multiple channels of communication.

**Your Delegation Tools:** Facilitator reviews the delegation tools, and participants reflect on what they've learned and how they will apply it. Volunteers share their insights and plans for application.

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