

BUILDING YOUR LEADERSHIP TOOLKIT

a six-month program to explore and develop the exceptional leader within

OBJECTIVE

This program is an opportunity for leaders to learn and put into action critical foundational skills in a safe and supportive environment. The outcome will be more confident leaders who continue to develop and hone their unique brand of outstanding leadership.

CONTENT

The content for this program was carefully selected based on input from focus groups with senior leaders and human resource professionals from a variety of organizations and non-profits. While there are many topics relevant for leaders, these were determined to be the most foundational. The six month program encourages participants to leverage the knowledge and experience of the group while building a powerful network.

MEETING FORMAT

The group of no more than 10 participants will meet every two weeks for 75 minutes via zoom over six months. The sessions are broken down as follows:
15-20 minutes - discussion of engagement with the topic from prior sessions.
10-15 minutes - introduction of new topic.
30 minutes - discussion, skill practice, sharing, and strategies.
15 minutes - questions and individual commitment to action.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

COACHING

In addition to the shared learning experience with colleagues in the group, each participant is provided with two individual coaching sessions to dive deeper into areas of personal interest. These 45-minute video sessions with Sharon occur during the course of the program; scheduled at a mutually convenient time.

VIDEOS

A one-minute video will be emailed between sessions that includes a recap of the topic, why it's important, and a call to action. This keeps participants continually engaged with what they are learning.

PEER CHATS

Participants will have monthly one-on-one conversations with others in the group to enhance learning and connection.



Sharon's course teaches truly transformational skills, even for the most seasoned leaders. She facilitates high quality conversations and delivers clear, actionable insights in short, rich sessions. Highly recommended to anyone wishing to mature their leadership impact."

*Phil, CTO
Fortune 100 financial services firm*

MEASUREMENT

Participants will complete an assessment at the beginning and end of the program to measure changes in leader efficacy using a validated measure.

BONUS CONTENT



READING

Each handout includes carefully curated suggestions for further reading from thought leaders on the topic being covered. This allows participants to dive deeper into any of the topics and serves as a valuable resource as they continue their leadership journey.



VIEWING/LISTENING

Each handout includes carefully curated suggestions for videos and podcasts on the topic being covered.



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If you are looking to grow your leadership skills with like-minded professionals across the country, please consider taking this class. While the content is fantastic and practical, the real growth comes from conversations with those in the class. Sharon does a great job of asking prompting questions, providing amazing information and leading the group.

- Kyle, Development Director, Global organization

SESSION #1: Psychological Safety and High-Quality Connections

Teams need psychological safety to perform well - the belief that individuals can share thoughts and ideas without fear of judgment, humiliation, or punishment. This session explores how individual leaders can build psychological safety for their team. As a group we will experience a psychological safety exercise to establish safety in the group and demonstrate one of many strategies. We also cover the importance of high-quality connections to foster engaging, respectful relationships.

SESSION #3: Emotional Intelligence - Self-Awareness and Empathy

Those who score high in EI are better able to handle stress, have more meaningful relationships, are more socially competent, report higher levels of well-being, show more optimal psychological functioning. This session covers two of the four pillars of Emotional Intelligence. Participants will learn small actionable strategies to build self-awareness and empathy. These are skills that can be used personally and professionally.

SESSION #5: Active Listening

The skill of active listening enables leaders to focus completely on the person speaking without distraction. In the current highly connected digital world, active listening has become more challenging. Learning to listen attentively is critical for leaders to build trust with colleagues and teams. An exercise during the session highlights the importance of both listening and being heard.

SESSION #2: Trust and Vulnerability

Trust and vulnerability go hand in hand and need to be demonstrated by leaders to create high-functioning teams. Participants will learn about David Maister's trust formula and explore why vulnerability - once shunned in the workplace - is now being embraced. The group will address how to find a balance between vulnerability and authenticity; how to share in a way that is comfortable and builds trust. The work of thought leaders such as Brené Brown, Stephen Covey, and Adam Grant will be introduced and discussed.

SESSION #4: Emotion Regulation and Leveraging Emotions

This session covers the remaining two pillars of Emotional Intelligence. Emotion regulation can be especially challenging in stressful work environments. This session highlights how individuals can keep their cool and make better decisions; especially in crises. Specific tools are introduced to manage negative emotions better. Leveraging emotions involves assessing situations and using appropriate timing to facilitate better outcomes.

SESSION #6: Mindfulness

There is considerable evidence that mindfulness practice can have the following benefits: reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression, better sleep, improved working memory, greater focus, a boost in the immune system, and emotion regulation. In addition, a mindfulness practice enables leaders to pause, assess and be responsive rather than reactive in work situations, reducing stress for themselves and their colleagues.



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This program was incredibly helpful for a soon to be supervisor like me. I deeply appreciated the thought put into each session's content, and the safe, vulnerable, and supportive space Sharon created. I'm looking forward to honing my skills with the tools and resources I gained from the program so I can support my new direct report to cultivate and express their strengths.

- Laura, Career Services, University of Virginia

SESSION #7: Inclusive Leadership

Inclusive leadership is a management style that recognizes and welcomes the unique perspective and background of each employee. This is critical to creating a successful work environment. Many of the topics covered in prior weeks support a more inclusive workplace. Company best practices are discussed and resources are shared for both education and implementation in the workplace.

SESSION #9: Receiving Feedback

Equally important as giving feedback is the ability to receive feedback graciously and with a growth mindset. When a leader is open to listening to colleagues and teammates without judgment it provides the opportunity to continue to build trust and psychological safety. It also can alert a leader to potential blind spots and areas for professional development. We will share strategies for shifting mindsets to remain open to feedback and to actively solicit more input from others to stay on a path of continual improvement.

SESSION #11: Priorities, Productivity, and Planning

As individuals move into roles of leadership and greater responsibility, effectively managing and communicating priorities is critical to success. This session includes strategies to set clear priorities daily, optimize productivity through increased focus, and use planning to best manage expectations. The group will share best practices so that each individual can determine what actions would best serve them moving forward.

SESSION #8: Giving Feedback

As stated by Ben Franklin, "Without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning." Providing feedback in a way that the recipient hears what is being said and is motivated to change behavior is a challenge for leaders. In this session, we discuss a framework for delivering constructive feedback and offer various strategies to enable leaders to provide feedback most effectively.

SESSION #10: Delegation: Transitioning from Individual Contributor to Manager

One of the most challenging areas for professional development is moving from an individual contributor to managing others and thinking more strategically. This requires effective and empowering delegation of tasks while communicating and keeping an eye on the team's strategy and how it relates to a company's mission. The best leaders focus on continually challenging the growth and development of their team while providing support without micromanaging.

SESSION #12: Your Unique Leadership Brand

Over the prior six months, participants have engaged in an in-depth study of the foundational skills needed to be an effective leader. During this session, each leader will have the opportunity to process the many concepts covered and consider how they want to define their unique leadership brand. Breakout sessions will allow small groups to work through how to most effectively communicate and implement their leadership brand as they continue to grow and develop their skills.



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