

# Leadership Success Program for Senior Leaders

## Program Background

To reach new heights of excellence and social impact, we must build on UCI's strengths to make our university even better. We have to encourage bold, innovative thinking, allow for calculated failure and learn from our mistakes in order to continually improve our organization and meet the demands of tomorrow. To achieve this, we must become an agile, performance driven, engaged workforce.

Leaders have a profound impact on the culture of our workplace whether they intended to or not. While organizational culture can be shaped by formal programs and efforts, it is primarily impacted through the daily interactions between leaders, employees, and the team's norms that are established over the years. Organizational culture is how things are done (or not done) around here.

This new leadership development program for senior leaders and the underpinning leadership framework have been designed to change "how things are done around here." The framework establishes expectations for all leaders across UCI: establish vision and direction, engage employees, and deliver results. The development program for senior leaders focuses on building nine capabilities that leaders at this level need to live into these new expectations.

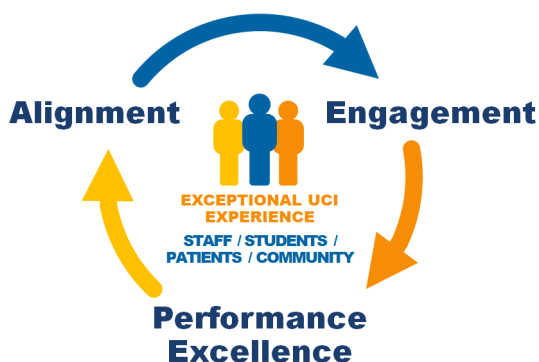


Figure 1 – Pathway to a high performance culture



Figure 2 – Leadership Expectations & Capabilities Framework

## Program Structure

The Leadership Success Program for Senior Leaders is a six (6)-month experience that enables leaders to meet the challenges of today's changing landscape and navigate UCI towards our Brilliant Future. The program incorporates facilitator-led instruction, in-depth group dialogue, asynchronous intersession application, and an action learning project. Program participants will be able to apply what they learned immediately and continue to enhance those capabilities through the course of the program.

Fourteen (14) synchronous sessions will be delivered over the first twenty-one (21) weeks of the program. Each session is filled with practical tips, tools, and techniques to get the leaders thinking and behaving differently.

- For sessions 1-6, each session will range from two (2) to three (3) hours in duration. One topic will be covered per session.
- For sessions 7-14, each session will be four (4) hours in duration. Two topics will be covered per session. Some sessions will include in-depth group dialogue.

Between each session, the participants will meet with their Accountability Groups to further discuss the concepts of each session and practice new approaches before they are applied on the job.

After the conclusion of the synchronous, facilitator-led sessions, each participant will work on Project Me, an individual action learning project.

As a result of COVID-19, synchronous instruction will be delivered virtually via Zoom until further notice.

## Program Journey

UCI Human Resources has established a content partnership with Mind Gym, a global provider of human capital and organizational improvement solutions, to provide business-tested instructional content for this program.

There are two main parts to the synchronous learning portion of the program. The first part provides a baseline of core capabilities and mindsets that participants will need to effectively lead supervisors, managers, and senior individual contributors under them. The second part dives into each of the leadership expectations for this level of leader.



Figure 3 – Leadership Success Program for Senior Leaders journey map

## Part I: Foundational

### Week 1: Building Belief

One of the biggest challenges in organizational change is to inspire others to first understand that the change is needed and then to act on it. Creating a strong change narrative that addresses five core beliefs will help people to engage and support the change.

Once the basics of your change narrative are developed, you need to think about how you deliver it to your specific audience. Change leaders need to help them find opportunities to “sense make” through discussion.

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Craft your change message to build five core beliefs in your people and increase organizational-change readiness and commitment
- Deliver your change narrative and consider how to make it more impactful
- Explore how to help your people to make sense of the narrative, interpret it their own way, and create ongoing dialogue

## **Week 2: Direct**

Most of us will have been told that as a manager we need to 'set the direction' for our team. But what does this really mean? More often we're not in control of decisions that are made higher up, we're dealing with ambiguity and change on a daily basis, and we're under pressure to deliver, so it can be hard to see what we can direct and how we should do it.

This session provides a framework you can apply to any situation, no matter how murky. We work through the fundamentals you need to be clear about, and explore the judgment calls you need to make to ensure everyone is clear on where they're going and what's expected of them. This isn't easy, but mastering this art is worth the effort: it frees up your time, leaves you feeling confident that your team will focus on the right things in the right way when you're not there, and it empowers others to deliver and grow. Most importantly, you don't have to be directive to direct. You can do it in your own style, with a repertoire of directive behaviors that suit you.

In this session you will:

- Discover what providing great direction looks like and bust some common myths
- Work through the fundamentals that you need to be clear about and how you'll know if you're doing well, then honestly appraise the extent to which you cover these now
- Practice applying some core principles that will help you take your team with you
- Recognize whether you tend to swoop into the detail or keep your distance, and practice flexing your position appropriately
- Explore your style of directing and the choices you can make, testing out different approaches on a range of familiar scenarios
- Plan how to reinforce the direction you're heading in day-to-day rather than as one occasion

## **Week 3: Different Perspectives**

"I just never saw it like that."

Everyone sees problems differently, and sometimes it is only by taking on another perspective that we're able to find the right solution to a problem.

When we're faced with a challenge we need to solve, we make a number of assumptions. If we see things in a new way can we get out of this autopilot mode and find new insights.

This session explores the various techniques we can use to help us to see challenges differently. By switching our perspective we will be able to uncover new ideas as well as untapped opportunities.

By the end of this session you will be able to:

- Avoid the assumptions you usually make when trying to solve problems
- Use various techniques that will enable you to switch your perspective
- Identify plenty of creative and original ideas to take on any challenge

## **Week 4: Hearing What People Say**

"What was that? Sorry, I was miles away."

We all think that we are good listeners, but would our colleagues, clients, family and friends agree?

Our minds are constantly evaluating and filtering information, and this makes effective listening a real challenge. Often when we think we are listening we are really only going through the motions. And what's worse, is this is more obvious to others than we think.

Listening is one of the most important yet under-rated communication skills. In this workout, you'll learn how to use your listening skills to halt arguments, raise people's opinions of you and persuade others around to your point of view.

By the end of this session you will be able to:

- Identify the many benefits of improving your listening skills
- Understand the different levels of listening and spot which one you most frequently use
- Employ techniques that will help you to focus your attention and listen more effectively

## **Week 5: Courageous Conversations**

When was the last time you found yourself in the middle of a heated conversation and wondered how it all got so out of control? Temperatures are rising. You can't agree, and emotions seem to be taking the lead.

We've all been there. Courageous conversations happen in every part of life; from sharing unpopular business targets with our team, to breaking up with a partner, or confronting a troublesome teen.

We can't avoid them. But we can get better at preparing for them.

This session explores how honest conversations can help you achieve positive outcomes and keep your relationships intact, even in the trickiest of circumstances.

By the end of this session you will be able to:

- Recognize common blocks that get in the way of having courageous conversations.
- Prepare effectively for any difficult conversation you may face in the future.
- Keep your emotions in check during tricky conversations so you stay firmly in control
- Confidently handle the reactions of others to preserve a positive relationship with them

## **Week 6: Performance Coaching**

What is the sign of a great manager? A great team.

As a manager, you will probably not be short of stories. You have achieved success, overcome challenges, and even made some worthwhile mistakes. And by taking the time to share these experiences, you can coach your team to a level of performance you'd be proud of.

In this session, you will discover practical tools and techniques that will boost your skills as a coach. Explore different coaching ingredients and how you can adapt to help any individual reach their potential.

Don't miss out on the opportunity to nurture and develop your greatest asset.

In this session, you will:

- Learn that coaching is about more than just following a model or framework
- Discover the key behaviors that make a performance coaching conversation have impact
- Practice using a range of techniques to apply what you've learned

## Part II: Advanced

### **Week 7: Leading in a VUCA World**

#### *Topic 1: Leading Change*

Leading through change can be tricky. When we're caught between a change initiative from the top, and resistance from our team, how do we find the right path?

Psychologically discarding the familiar and trying something new provokes a variety of responses from resisting uncertainty to plunging straight in. Your job as a leader is to deal with them all.

Underpinning all stages of leading through change is the importance of a change-positive mindset. In this topic, we look at ways to cultivate a mindset that makes change exciting and possible to handle. This topic will also help you to identify your default settings when it comes to leading change, and expand your repertoire so that you have all the tools you need to become a leader of many parts.

You may not be able to control other people's reactions, but by anticipating and responding skillfully you can turn the time surrounding change into a source of innovation and renewal.

In this topic, you will:

- Understand what happens psychologically when we experience change and the reasons people resist
- Explore the benefits and drawbacks of different approaches to leading change
- Discover the different ways people respond to change and the best way to deal with each
- Uncover a range of practical tools that will make their crazy time a lot less chaotic

#### *Topic 2: Affinity and Beyond*

Most organizations claim to put their customer first. Most customers would be happy to settle for second or even third. There are a few simple things we can all do to close the gap.

80% of companies believe that they provide superior customer service. Only 8% of their customers agree. Employees are of a similar mindset, commonly rating their personal commitment to customers at double that of their employer.

There are plenty of simple things we can all do to that will change this fast.

One lies in giving customers what they want rather than what they ask for. If this sounds confusing, risky or you're not sure how to do it, then a great opportunity awaits.

A second demands that we focus on the myriad things we can do to make my customer smile whatever the circumstances and give our colleagues the benefit of the ask.

This topic explores these and many other ways to turn 'customer first' from mantra into mainstream.

In this topic, you will:

- Unearthed the prime causes of the gap between the service we give and the service we receive
- Appreciated that there is plenty we can do ourselves to change this
- Practiced a range of techniques that we can apply in pretty much every exchange we have with a customer
- Decided what you will do to put your customers first

## **Week 8: Innovate**

If we asked you to name ten highly innovative companies, who would you choose? Whoever you picked, we can probably guess what they have in common: a constant stream of new products and services, and a visionary leader.

Well we've got something new to share too: whizz-bang launches and idea-spewing CEOs aren't the biggest drivers of innovation. That title is reserved for a little thing called culture. And since the biggest driver of culture is managers, it looks like innovation is down to you.

Don't panic – you don't need to be the next Steve Jobs. In fact, you don't need to be an innovator yourself at all. Your job is to create a community of employees with the motivation, confidence and skills to generate new ideas. You want to build an environment in which innovation isn't reserved for annual product launches, but infiltrates every working day – from finding new ways to solve problems, to continuously improving your processes, structures and client offer.

And now for our own whizz-bang launch: a set of tools and tips to help you get there.

In this session, you will:

- Understood what it means to innovate, what's up for grabs if we do it, and what's at risk if we don't
- Considered what helps and hinders a climate of innovation
- Learned how to equip your team with innovation skills and explored the leadership behaviors you need to support them
- Discovered tools to help you tackle your own innovation challenges



## **Week 9: Sharing the Vision**

### *Topic 1: The Big Picture*

Imagine trying to solve a jigsaw puzzle without knowing what the picture on top of the puzzle box looks like. All the little pieces would be meaningless on their own and you'd waste time guessing what the solution could be. Only when we know the bigger picture do the details make sense. Similarly, when faced with our own challenges - from wanting to lose weight, to planning for an upcoming project - the best approach can be taking a moment to consider the wider context, rather than jumping in to manage the details.

In this workout you'll be given some tools to help you shift your perspective so you get all the information to solve the right problem effectively and make an informed decision. By zooming out, you'll become more aware of how things fit together and how small changes can have big effects.

In this topic, you will:

- Look at problems with a fresh lens, seeing things you never noticed before
- See what stops you from big picture thinking and make sure you can remove these obstacles
- Apply big picture thinking to your own life

### *Topic 2: Storytelling*

Once upon time, stories were a big part of our lives. As children, we grow up surrounded by fairy tales and storybooks that capture our imaginations. But if stories can be so magical, what stops us using them as adults?

Most of us think stories are for children and once we grow up we need to rely on charts, data, and analytical reports to understand a situation and convince others of its importance. But who is more compelling: The presenter of numerous slides full of dry data about company performance? Or the one who paints a vision of the future by telling a story about the company's modest beginnings and how they turned almost nothing into something amazing.

In this topic, you'll learn how to use the power of storytelling to make a good impression, captivate anyone, paint a picture of the future or turn any form of communication from mundane to engaging. And you'll see that stories aren't just for kids.

In this topic, you will:

- Understand how storytelling works and why it is powerful
- Learn how to use stories to influence others
- Take dry data and facts and convert them into a compelling business story

## **Week 10: Developing the Next Leaders**

### *Topic 1: Shaping Future*

How often do you set off on a journey without a destination in mind or a map in hand?

Probably not very often. However, when it comes to our career we rarely take the time to think about where we're headed. If we are able to identify what we're aiming for in our career, we can carve out the path that will help us get there. What's more, if we help our people to find their perfect path too, they'll become high performers who boost business and raise the bar for others.

This session explores how we can map out our future and help others do the same. With this map in mind, we can identify the steps we need to take to bring us closer to our future vision.

In this topic, you will:

- Identify what needs to be in place to create an ideal future for you and your team
- Understand your role as a manager in getting your team members where they want to be
- Help your team identify the steps they need to take in order to achieve their career goals

### *Topic 2: Play to Strengths*

Where do you think it's more important to focus—on the things your team are great at, or the areas they could stand to improve?

Typical performance management processes tend to put emphasis on development and improvement, but there's reward in shifting your attention to strengths. When it comes to getting results, it's a game changer. Managers who are able to leverage their team's strengths see higher performance, increased financial gains, and more committed employees.

In this topic, we show you how to make this shift and unlock the potential of your team while learning more about your own strengths in the process.

In this topic, you will:

- Discover how you, as a manager, can uncover the strengths around you
- Explore ways to help team members utilize their strengths more day to day
- Consider how to set your team up overall so this new strengths focus pays dividends

## **Week 11: Energize**

We've all met people whose energy is infectious, no matter how boring the topic they're talking about is. And we've all met people who suck the life out of a room, leaving us feeling drained and demotivated.

Energizing is all about giving energy, vitality and enthusiasm to others. This doesn't mean that you have to be hyper-energetic all the time. Instead, managers who energize others conduct positive emotional energy by finding their own authentic style.

Firmly based on current research, this session explores why the ability to energize can be a manager's ace card, and delves into five practical tactics anyone can employ to increase the energy in their teams.

In this session you will:

- Discover how emotional energy impacts your team and their performance
- Honestly appraise the extent to which you conduct and sap energy right now
- Practice creating meaning and a sense of purpose for the people you manage
- Reflect on your signature style and how you convey passion
- Explore why being present matters so much and what you can do to stay in the zone
- Consider how you can harness the power of progress to energize your team
- Plan how you can affirm others to boost their positivity and performance

## **Week 12: Leading With Impact**

### *Topic 1: Influence and Persuade*

Ever watched someone skillfully talk their way out of a speeding ticket? Or found yourself seduced by a savvy sales person? Maybe you've found yourself moved by a rousing speech. Or been inspired to give money to charity after listening to a friend talk about their great work. How is it that some people manage to be so convincing? This session will explain what skills we can learn from people who are great influencers and how we can put these to use in our own life.

In this topic, you will:

- Apply 9 different techniques to influence and persuade others
- Understand which influencing tactic is your default mode and which other tactics you can incorporate to be more persuasive
- Overcome blocks that regularly stop you from influencing others

## *Topic 2: Compelling Case*

Daniel Kahneman is the only psychologist to have a Nobel Prize. He won it for Economics, for a paper published in an obscure journal read by only a few people. When asked about it, he doesn't credit his actual findings for the acclaim he received. Instead, he says he simply used the right hooks at the start of the paper, compelling people to read on.

Whether convincing a prospective client to buy your product, your Finance Director to increase your budget, or your partner to come see the new Spielberg blockbuster, we all have a natural approach to making others go with our suggestion. And if we expand our range of techniques, we can become more compelling.

Daniel Kahneman used the right psychological tactics; this workout will help you to do so too.

In this topic, you will:

- Imagined what it is like to be the person you are selling to and so how to adapt your case
- Planned a particular case you want to make, tried a variety of different ways to structure it and practiced delivering it
- Considered how you might accessorize your case to make it compelling

## **Week 13: Execute**

Let's face it, 'executing' doesn't sound sexy. But in a world that's ever more complicated, ambiguous and that changes faster than you can say 'Hey – who's the new guy?', the ability to get things done is more important than ever.

Whilst plans are useful, we all know that the reality is messy and a plan will only get you so far. Exceptional execution is about creating a culture of focused discipline that enables people to know what's expected of them, to play their part unhindered, and to respond swiftly when things change.

Managers who excel at this focus on: what's important (rather than urgent), what's on the horizon (rather than in the foreground), and on opportunities to improve every step of the way. This session delves into practical tools to help you and your team execute with flair, every time.

In this session you will:

- Discover why execution skills deserve to be put on a pedestal
- Reflect on the difference between being busy and being focused, and honestly appraise where you spend your time

- Explore how you can manage your mind-set to avoid common traps, keep distractions away and spend time on what's truly important
- Practice getting stakeholders on-side so they become your allies to executing
- Consider how to provide 'air cover' for your team by both pre-empting and removing obstacles
- Work through getting crystal clear on who's accountable for what (and holding them to it)
- Plan how to embed a culture of execution in your team through continuous learning

## **Week 14: Establishing Your Brand**

### *Topic 1: Follow Me*

The world is full of leaders. So why should anyone follow you?

There is only factor which is common across all successful leaders.

Managers who are deft at reading a situation and who use their insight to adopt a suitable response are not only more likely to win over hearts and heads but also to keep them. They may seem fixed at their core but at the periphery they are anything but: at one moment buzzing with enthusiasm, at another all ears and empathy, and at a third offering a well-judged compromise.

By developing our social antennae and stretching our social dexterity, we greatly increase our capacity to build followers.

This topic moves away from the leadership clichés and looks at the practical things we can all do so that when we lead, others follow.

In this topic, you will:

- Understood what it takes to build followers (and not just on Twitter)
- Discovered how much of a sensing manager you are already
- Delved into the importance of authenticity and explored practical ways to increase your own dexterity while remaining authentic
- Appreciated the power of personal recognition and learned a simple way to help people feel appreciated
- Explored how to build a sense of solidarity within your team

### *Topic 2: Me Inc.*

When we hear the word 'brand' it's often the big names like Apple, Nike and Starbucks that spring to mind, and we immediately picture their logos and what they stand for. However, despite the inner core of those brands, they aren't set in stone. They are

designed, refined, refreshed and adapted for different audiences, appetites and cultures.

And it's much the same when we think about our own personal brand. We need to be authentic, yet flexible, to suit different situations. The good news is that we can create, shape and fine tune our personal brand, because if we don't, it will be done for us.

In this topic, you will:

- Reflect on and refresh your existing personal brand
- Communicate your personal brand to various audiences
- Use your personal brand to increase your influence and the depth of your business relationships

## Project Me

At the end of the synchronous instruction, each participant and their leader will identify an opportunity to prepare and position their team(s) for the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous world ahead. The participant will then have ten (10) weeks to design and begin implementing their plan. Each participant will present their plan and progress to the entire cohort during the final session of the program.

The participant will continue executing their plan until they have achieved the intended results. Throughout the process, each participant will provide regular progress updates to their leader and to cohort members during additional post-program activities.