

Leadership Academy

Foundational Leadership Manager Guide

Purpose

As a manager of a team member completing the Foundational Leadership program, this guide is intended to:

- Provide you with information about the program and requirements for your team member.
- Help you to support your team member as they move through the program, including reflecting on key learnings and finding opportunities for on-the-job application.

Supporting your team member

As manager you can help and support your team member by:

- Supporting them with space and time to complete the online program. The program is fully self-paced but will require focussed time for learning to maximise the value of the program.
- Meeting regularly with your team member to discuss their learning and how they will apply their new knowledge and capabilities from the modules.
- Sharing your perspective on the ideas and concepts explored in the modules.
- Providing them with ongoing feedback on their leadership during and after the program.

These discussions can take place during your regular meetings. To support these discussions with your team member, the table on page 4 outlines suggested questions and points of discussion you can use after each module.

Program Information

The Foundational Leadership program is an online, self-paced leadership development program. It is designed to equip new and aspiring people leaders at the University with foundational leadership skills in the University of Sydney context.

The key program themes include:

1. Collaborating with others
2. Developing others
3. Thinking and solving problems creatively
4. Navigating change with an adaptive mindset
5. Demonstrating accountability in your leadership actions
6. Working effectively to prioritise, organise, and deliver goals as a team

As a guide, this program will be suitable for professional staff (HEO 5 - 7) and academic staff (Level A - B) but is available to all members of the University community.

Structure

Introduction	Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Module 6
Introductory Module	Collaborating with Others	Develops Others	Thinking and Solving Problems Creatively	Navigating Change	Demonstrating Accountability	Working Effectively
30 mins	3 hours	3 hours	2 hour 30 mins	2 hr 45 mins	3 hours	2 hr 45 mins

The program is designed to be completed in approximately 14 weeks. However, learning is self-paced, allowing participants to progress through the modules at their own convenience and focus on the most relevant content. Participants have the flexibility to choose which modules to complete.

Components

Online Learning Modules

Each of the six online modules is designed to support embedded learning through a variety of components, including:

- **Video Testimonials:** Videos from University of Sydney leaders offering their top tips for new leaders, sharing their biggest learnings, and explaining each module's capabilities within the University of Sydney context.
- **Digital Learning Content:** A mix of LinkedIn Learning modules from academic and subject matter experts, podcasts, and University of Sydney materials.
- **Interactive Assessments and Reflection Activities:** Essential tools for reinforcing learning and encouraging self-reflection.

Digital Resource Library

The online modules are supported by a [Digital Resource Library](#) of curated academic and hands-on resources.

Learning Journal

Participants will have access to a learning journal to record their key insights and reflections.

Community of Practice

Participants will have access to a Viva Engage community to share their learning, network and ask questions.

One-to-One Meetings: Questions and discussion points

Before starting the program, meet with your staff member to:

- **Explore their goals:** Understand their hopes for the program, how it aligns with their career aspirations, and how you can support them.
- **Discuss the modules:** Identify which themes they are unfamiliar with, or which would aid their development. Decide whether they will complete the full program (recommended for aspiring leaders) or focus on specific modules. If the latter, help guide them with selecting these.
- **Agree on a timeline:** Determine when they will complete the modules and schedule touchpoints to discuss their progress. They may need your support in prioritising their development alongside other work commitments.

Module	Key content	Potential questions & discussion points
1. Collaborating with Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding your communication style • Emotional intelligence • Inclusive collaboration • Effective team collaboration • Mapping and building your professional network 	<p>Ask: What have you learnt about your communication style? Are there any collaborations you're finding difficult - how can I help?</p> <p>Do: Your participant has been encouraged to map their professional network. Consider whether there are useful contacts within or outside the University you can connect them with.</p> <p>Share: Share your reflections on your own communication style with your team member— how has this helped you in your career to date?</p>
2. Developing Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovering your own strengths • Leading with a growth mindset • Creating psychological safety in your team • Introduction to coaching and the GROW model • Giving quality feedback 	<p>Ask: What do you see as your key strengths? Are there opportunities for us to leverage these strengths more in the team?</p> <p>Do: Identify opportunities for your participant to mentor or coach others in the team. Set up a meeting between your participant and mentee.</p> <p>Share: Share your own experiences with giving feedback and coaching. What did you find difficult earlier in your career and how did you overcome that?</p>

3. Thinking and Solving Problems Creatively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem solving • Decision making strategies • Cultivating solution-oriented thinking • Finding creative solutions • The problem of group think • Psychological safety in the context of creative problem solving 	<p>Ask: How has your approach to problem solving and decision making changed?</p> <p>Do: Your participant has completed an activity to generate creative solutions to a work-based problem. Ask them to share their thinking and provide feedback.</p> <p>Share: Consider a time when you or someone you work with has come up with a creative solution to a problem. Share your key learnings with your team member.</p>
4. Navigating Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivating an adaptable mindset • Supporting your team through uncertainty • The Circle of Control • Change in the higher education context • Overcoming resistance to change – using the SCARF Model • Adaptive Leadership 	<p>Ask: What were your key learnings from this module? Do you think there are any takeaways for (y)our team?</p> <p>Do: Identify if there are any changes on the horizon in your team (people, process or technology) and offer your participant an opportunity to support or lead the change.</p> <p>Share: In the module, your team member was asked to consider different responses to change. Share your own experiences with change – is it something you enjoy or find difficult?</p>
5. Demonstrating Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking personal accountability at work • Leading accountability in your team • Understanding your personal values • Applying the University values (Excellence, Trust, Accountability). 	<p>Ask: Are there any initiatives you'd like to take the lead on? What do you need from me?</p> <p>Do: Provide feedback on how your participant demonstrates accountability in their role, focussing on specific behaviours.</p> <p>Share: Share what the University values of excellence, trust and accountability mean to you with your team's context.</p>
6. Working Effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discover your personal productivity style • Prioritising between competing demands • Time management 	<p>Ask: When are you most productive? Do our current ways of working support or would you like to suggest a change?</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Optimising workflow and team effectiveness	<p>Do: Your participant has completed a reflection activity on team effectiveness. Ask them for their reflections and offer them an opportunity to lead a team activity or trial a new way of working.</p> <p>Share: Share your top 3 work priorities with your team member – they may not be aware.</p>
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Questions

If you have any questions about the Foundational Leadership Program, please contact Leadership.development@sydney.edu.au.

If any of the concepts in this document are unfamiliar to you and you would like to explore in more detail, the Foundational Leadership modules are accessible via Workday Learning.