
Course Title: Advanced Leadership & Influence for Project & Program Managers: Driving Strategic Initiatives in Complex Environments

Duration: 5 Days (approximately 35-40 instructional hours)

Course Goal: To equip senior project and program managers with the advanced leadership capabilities, political acumen, and influential communication skills required to lead high-stakes initiatives, navigate complex stakeholder landscapes, and consistently deliver strategic value beyond the triple constraint (scope, schedule, budget).

Core Focus: This is a leadership course, not a technical project management course. It assumes mastery of PMBOK/PRINCE2 fundamentals. The curriculum focuses on the sophisticated "soft skills" that differentiate the most successful leaders: strategic thinking, stakeholder influence, team empowerment, and personal resilience.

Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Transition from a tactical project manager to a strategic business leader.
- Apply situational leadership to adapt their style to the needs of their team and stakeholders.
- Conduct a sophisticated stakeholder analysis and develop a tailored influence strategy for each key player.
- Master the art of "leading without authority" across functional and organizational boundaries.
- Utilize principled negotiation techniques to resolve conflicts and secure resources.
- Build and lead high-performing, resilient project teams in a complex, often matrixed, environment.
- Coach and mentor team members to foster a culture of ownership and accountability.
- Communicate with impact to senior executives, translating project details into strategic business implications.
- Build their personal leadership brand and professional resilience to thrive under pressure.

Target Audience:

- **Senior Project Managers, Program Managers, and Portfolio Managers.**
- **PMO Directors and Managers.**
- **Experienced project leaders** who are moving into roles with greater complexity, ambiguity, and strategic importance.
- **Consultants** who lead major client engagements.

Prerequisites:

- **Significant, demonstrable experience managing projects or programs is mandatory.** (e.g., PMP certification or equivalent experience).
- Experience working in a matrixed or complex organizational environment.
- A strong desire for self-reflection and leadership development.

Teaching Methodology:

This is an immersive, highly interactive, and peer-driven leadership seminar.

- **Case Study Method:** The course is built around complex, real-world case studies of major programs that succeeded or failed based on leadership, not technical execution.
- **Leadership Simulations & Role-Plays:** A central feature of the course. Participants will be put in the "hot seat" to navigate difficult leadership challenges, such as dealing with a powerful, resistant stakeholder or resolving a high-stakes team conflict.
- **Peer Coaching Circles:** Confidential, facilitated sessions where participants can bring their own real-world leadership challenges to the group and receive structured coaching and advice from their peers.
- **360-Degree Feedback (Optional Pre-work):** Participants can complete a leadership self-assessment or a 360-degree feedback instrument before the course to identify personal development areas.

Materials Provided:

- **The Strategic PM's Leadership Playbook:** A high-level briefing book with frameworks for:
 - Situational Leadership
 - Stakeholder Influence Mapping
 - Principled Negotiation
 - Team Performance Models

- All case study materials and workshop exercises.
- A personal leadership development plan template.
- A curated reading list of seminal works on leadership, influence, and organizational politics.
- Certificate of Completion.

Detailed Day-by-Day Curriculum

Day 1: The Strategic Leader's Mindset

- **Module 1: From Project Manager to Business Leader (Approx. 2 hours)**
 - Welcome, introductions, and establishing a peer-coaching environment.
 - The Leadership Leap: Moving from managing scope, schedule, and budget to driving business value and outcomes.
 - **Workshop:** A self-assessment of where participants currently spend their time and energy on the tactical-to-strategic spectrum.
- **Module 2: Thinking Strategically (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
 - How to connect your project/program to the organization's overarching strategy.
 - "Speaking the language of the C-Suite": Translating project metrics into business KPIs.
 - Developing business acumen beyond your project's domain.
- **Module 3: Situational Leadership in a Project Context (Approx. 3 hours)**
 - There is no "one size fits all" leadership style.
 - A deep dive into the Situational Leadership® model: Directing, Coaching, Supporting, and Delegating.
 - **Workshop:** Analyzing different team member scenarios and choosing the most effective leadership approach for each.

Day 2: The Art of Influence

- **Module 4: Leading Without Formal Authority (Approx. 2 hours)**
 - The core challenge of the matrixed environment.
 - The sources of personal power: Expert, Referent, and Information power.
- **Module 5: Advanced Stakeholder Analysis & Influence Strategy (Approx. 3 hours)**
 - Moving beyond a simple Power/Interest grid.
 - Mapping the "influence network": understanding the informal relationships and political currents.
 - Developing a tailored influence plan for your most critical stakeholders.
 - **Workshop:** Create a detailed stakeholder influence map for a complex case study.
- **Module 6: Principled Negotiation & Conflict Resolution (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
 - Moving from "win-lose" to "win-win."
 - Focusing on interests, not positions.
 - Techniques for navigating high-stakes negotiations for resources, scope, and priorities.
 - **Intensive Role-Play:** A multi-party negotiation simulation where program managers must secure resources from different functional heads with competing priorities.

Day 3: Building and Leading High-Performing Teams

- **Module 7: The Anatomy of a High-Performing Project Team (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
 - Beyond the Tuckman model (Forming, Storming, etc.).
 - The critical role of psychological safety in fostering innovation and risk-taking.
 - Establishing a powerful team charter and rules of engagement.
- **Module 8: The Leader as Coach (Approx. 4.5 hours)**
 - Shifting from "telling" to "asking."
 - Using powerful coaching questions to foster ownership, problem-solving, and development in your team members.
 - A practical coaching framework (e.g., GROW model).
 - **Coaching Clinic:** An intensive, triads-based practice session where participants take turns coaching, being coached, and observing.

Day 4: Communicating with Impact and Navigating Politics

- **Module 9: Communicating with the C-Suite (Approx. 3.5 hours)**
 - How to prepare for and deliver a high-stakes executive briefing.
 - The "BLUF" principle (Bottom Line Up Front).
 - Structuring your message to focus on strategic implications, risks, and recommendations, not just project status.
 - **Presentation Clinic:** Participants will prepare and deliver a 5-minute "go/no-go" briefing to a mock "Steering Committee" and receive feedback.

- **Module 10: Understanding and Navigating Organizational Politics (Approx. 3.5 hours)**
 - Politics as the informal "how things get done."
 - Ethical navigation: Building coalitions, understanding unspoken rules, and managing your reputation.
 - Identifying and countering destructive political tactics.

Day 5: The Resilient Leader

- **Module 11: Leading Through Ambiguity and Change (Approx. 2 hours)**
 - The project manager's role as a "stability anchor" during turbulent times.
 - Communicating with transparency and empathy when you don't have all the answers.
- **Module 12: Building Your Personal Resilience (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
 - Managing the immense pressure of high-stakes projects.
 - Techniques for managing stress, avoiding burnout, and maintaining perspective.
 - Building your personal "Board of Directors" for support and counsel.
- **Module 13: Capstone: The Program Rescue (Approx. 3 hours)**
 - **Final Simulation:** Participants are brought in as the new Program Manager for a strategically critical program that is failing. It's over budget, behind schedule, the team is demoralized, and key stakeholders are losing faith.
 - Working in teams, they must develop a 90-day "rescue plan" that focuses not just on the technicals, but on the leadership actions needed to:
 - 1. Re-align and re-engage stakeholders.
 - 2. Re-build team morale and focus.
 - 3. Present a credible path forward to the executive sponsor.
- **Course Wrap-up & Personal Leadership Commitment (Approx. 0.5 hours)**
 - Participants will complete a personal leadership development plan, committing to working on 1-2 key skills.
 - Final Q&A and peer commitments.

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