

# Universal Leadership Skills

## Background and description

Many people become leaders by accident - often because they were good at their last job and were promoted to a position where they became responsible for people. Often leaders are launched on unsuspecting followers with little or no practical leadership training. However, the internet is crawling with tips about how to be a better leader and the shelves of bookshops are groaning under the weight of books about leadership.

Universal Leadership Skills cuts through all the hype. You will consider your existing leadership styles and practices and learn tried-and-tested models and skills to help you improve. The course combines input on the ideas and philosophies underpinning leadership with practices and techniques that can be immediately applied back in the workplace. The UIC has been running this course for more than 20 years. We know what you will learn works because people tell us it does.

It doesn't matter about the nature of your organisation. Previous participants have come from very large, very small, for profit, not for profit, charities, public sector, private sector, long-established, new start-ups - the list goes on. The only real requirement is that you lead a team at a managerial level.

Every leader should remember that it is YOU your people talk about in the pub with their colleagues and around the dinner table with their families. What would you like them to say about you as their boss?

## Duration and who should attend

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3 days

### Who should attend?

- Chief Executives
- Directors
- Senior managers
- Anyone who leads a team at a managerial level

Universal Leadership Skills is not just for new or inexperienced leaders. Many previous participants have led teams for years and still found the course invaluable. Indeed we have a number of senior leaders who re-attend every few years as they find the course provides thinking time and an opportunity to refocus and reassess their leadership practices in ever-changing circumstances.

People who do not line manage a team should not attend.

## Style and structure of the course

Universal Leadership Skills is highly participative and practical. Participants are asked to apply what they are learning to their own real-life scenarios for each session. This includes the opportunity to reflect on your existing leadership habits, pick the brains of the Consultants running the course and, of course, interact with the other participants.

This is an unusual course as we find that each person has a different 'light bulb moment'. After several years of observing this, we finally realised that this is because what is going on for each individual, their team and their organisation is different for everybody. What is certain is that you *will* have at least one very bright light bulb moment.

To help you back in the workplace, participants receive our highly practical and comprehensive manual, The Complete Guide to Leadership and access to further on-line resources.

## What you will learn - day 1

The focus of day 1 is understanding the principles that underpin your leadership actions and practices. Whether you are aware of it or not, everything you do as a leader has an underpinning principle. Therefore it is useful to understand what these principles are and where they came from. It is also helpful to know what makes people tick and the consequences of different approaches to leadership.

### Leadership and management - the background to the ideas

- Where the ideas come from  
The work of the early thinkers - Frederick Taylor, Kurt Lewin, Douglas McGregor and Mary Parker Follett - the pioneers of leadership theory
- Why leadership is needed
- The difference between leadership and management  
...and the difference between management and supervision
- The link between leadership and the Sigmoid Curve  
...and why leadership practices in your organisation may be putting you out of business

### Motivation

'Twenty tips for motivating your employees' - that's what a typical 1 day course offers. We won't be doing this - instead we suggest you don't even bother trying to motivate the people who work for you. Want to know why? You need to know:

- The difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
- How a leader can de-motivate people
- Satisfiers and dissatisfiers in the workplace and what *you* can do about them
- Why reading for pizza is bad and that chimpanzees like to paint

## What you will learn - day 2

The focus of day 2 is about leading the individuals who work for you, assessing each person and adopting appropriate leadership styles and practices to get the best out of them.

### Flexible Leadership

The Flexible Leadership model looks at different leadership styles and puts the idea that 'one style fits all' in the dustbin. After this session, if anyone ever asks you what your leadership style is, you will always answer "it depends". The basis of the Flexible Leadership model is that when leading an individual you need to adopt a leadership style based on the ability and competence of that individual and the nature of the task in hand. We will examine the resulting leadership styles and match these to your own real-life situations. Then we will identify the actions associated with each.

### Leading individuals

We will introduce a series of key principles for leading individuals. We will also provide a person-by-person checklist to help you understand the people who work for you. We will do some work around how to structure a 1-1 and offer an alternative to traditional performance appraisal.

Finally, we will give you some tips on how to lead through others. This is important because how the people who report to you lead the people who report to them is your responsibility, not theirs.

## What you will learn - day 3

The focus of day 3 is about leading your team as a collective and developing them as a group of people that work well together.

### Leading your team

This is about leading your team as a whole rather than as a group of individuals. We will look at when to utilise individual effort and when to use the team collectively. This session includes:

- An analysis of how effective your team is and the areas you need to focus on to improve
- The Forming-Storming-Norming-Performing model of developmental stages for a team, how to assess where your team is currently and what you as a leader need to do to move them forward
- The skill and practicalities of preparing and delivering a Leader Speaks for your team
- If time allows we will also examine your team structure and see how the Organisation Chart is helping or hindering getting things done

### Leading your boss

It is the relationship with your boss that can make or break how happy you are at work. To finish the course we will have a look at the realities of what you can and can't do to improve this relationship.



## Thinking time

One of the things that previous participants of Universal Leadership Skills tell us is how much they appreciate the opportunity for reflection and the thinking space provided by the course. In some ways, the content of the training is less important than the thoughts you have while you're being trained about what to do differently back in the workplace.

The background to leadership, the theory and the exercises will help you get a new perspective on how you have been leading and on the people in your team and organisation. 3 days away from your busy day-to-day routine presents an excellent opportunity to reflect on your organisation, your team and yourself. Also you will spend your time in the company of other leaders and you will get as much out of interacting with them in the exercises and breaks as you will get from being in the training room.

This is why many leaders come away from Universal Leadership Skills feeling focused and energised, ready to make the changes that will make them better leaders, and improve their teams and organisations as a result.

