

Essential Skills for Leading Change

Learning Modules & Dates

Definitions

Live learning sessions (1½ – 2 hours) – fast paced interactive sessions to introduce the theme and relevance to the network, case study examples (sector and non-sector) and use discussion groups to apply learning.

Follow up peer-led session (1½ hours) – a chance to discuss the topic in more detail with your peers bringing your local learning to the table – facilitated by Collaborate colleagues. Where a live learning session includes a peer-led learning session, by registering for this module, you are also committing to attend the peer-led session.

Skills session (2-3 hours) – focused sessions to introduce the skill, practice it and provide a platform for reflection, application and peer discussion.

Theme A: The foundations of systems leadership

This theme is about exploring what it means to think through a systems lens, and to understand the particular system you are trying to influence; the mindsets and approaches suited to exercising leadership in this context; and your role in leading change.

MODULE	LIVE LEARNING SESSION	DATE	FOLLOW-UP PEER-LED SESSION
Module 1: Thinking in Systems	This is an introduction to the main concepts of systems leadership, including the mindsets and behaviours valuable for exercising leadership in place often acting beyond your authority. It will cover the importance of problem diagnosis and systemic analysis, building collaborative capacity, and acting with others. As an introduction to the overall programme, it will include an overview of the programme, introduce the importance of personal reflection and tools to assist, and explain the different ways participants can access support.	Thursday 21st Jan, 9.30 - 11.30	Not applicable
Module 2: Your role in leading change	This module will enable you to gain a deeper understanding of your role within the system you are seeking to change, your authorization to act, and your motivations for doing so. It will help you to understand the value of attending to differences in perspectives and sources of insight, including your own blind spots. It will also cover the dangers, challenges and risks of exercising leadership, and how you can manage yourself and find the support you need.	Thursday 4th Feb, 9.30 - 11.30	Thursday 11th Feb, 9.30 - 11.00
Module 3: Understanding your system	In this module you will learn how to understand the systemic context in which problems or challenges you are facing are located, and how to map systems sufficiently to understand strategies and paths for action, including understanding your role within the system you are seeking to change.	Thursday 18th Mar, 9.30 - 11.30	Thursday 25th Mar, 9.30 - 11.00

**There is a natural build between modules 1, 2 and 3 and therefore these will be bundled together when booking.*

Theme B: Becoming a system activist

This theme is about developing the skills and behaviours you need to become more effective in creating systemic change.

MODULE	LIVE LEARNING SESSION	DATE	FOLLOW-UP PEER-LED SESSION
Module 4: Skills and behaviours for systems leadership	In this module you will develop your repertoire of skills for systems leadership, including relationship building and empathy; understanding biases, valuing difference and living with disagreement; storytelling and narrative development; facilitating change conversations; and influencing and negotiating.	Thursday 22nd Apr, 9.30 - 11.30	Not applicable
	*Skills session: practice and reflection – relationship building; developing empathy	Tuesday 27th Apr, 3.00 - 5.00	Not applicable
	*Skills session: practice and reflection – understanding biases; valuing difference	Tuesday 4th May, 3.00 - 5.00	Not applicable
	*Skills session: practice and reflection – storytelling; change conversations; influencing	Thursday 6th May, 9.30 - 11.30	Not applicable
	*Skills session: practice and reflection – negotiation	Tuesday 11th May, 9.30 - 12.30	Not applicable

**Before accessing any of the 'skills sessions' we would expect you to attend the live learning session or watch the recorded on-demand version of module 4 to give you a good basic knowledge.*

Theme C: Building collaborative capacity and taking collaborative action

Systems leadership is a team game. With this in mind, in this theme we will shift our focus from the personal towards the organisational and systemic, and understand what is needed to take sustained collaborative action.

MODULE	LIVE LEARNING SESSION	DATE	FOLLOW-UP PEER-LED SESSION
Module 5: Building collaborative capacity	This module will focus on the soft and hard infrastructure needed to enable purposeful, sustained collaboration over time. It will provide a grounding in the barriers and enablers of collaboration, including the importance of strengthening relationships; developing common purpose and shared expectations about behaviour and ways of working; and developing mechanisms to support and maintain work across organisational boundaries, including the role of backbone organisations.	Thursday 20th May, 9.30 - 11.30	Thursday 27th May, 9.30 - 11.00
Module 6: Partnering across difference	Systems leadership is about sharing power and distributing leadership, building on strengths, and developing the capacity of partners to act together even when you don't always agree on everything. This module will provide a grounding means to do this, providing an overview of tools and approaches to help you do so – from Appreciative Inquiry to Asset-based Community Development – and signposting opportunities to develop your practice further.	Thursday 10th Jun, 9.30 - 11.30	Not applicable
Module 7: Changing systems through collaborative action	In this module we will consider different strategies and approaches to taking collaborative action, building on the skills of problem diagnosis and understanding problems within their systemic context developed in Module 3. You will learn how to maintain focus on objectives while being flexible on means; how to use test and learn approaches to find effective ways forward; how to sequence actions to build momentum for change; and how to coordinate activity with others.	Thursday 24th Jun, 9.30 - 11.30	Thursday 1st July, 9.30 - 11.00

**Before accessing modules 5-7 we would expect you to attend the live learning sessions or watch the recorded on-demand versions of module 1-3 to give you a good basic knowledge.*

Theme D: Learning as a driver of systems change

Learning is a critical driver of change in complex systems, at the personal, organisational and systemic levels. In this final module we will explore both the importance of learning habits and culture, and how to measure impact without distorting performance.

MODULE	LIVE LEARNING SESSION	DATE	FOLLOW-UP PEER-LED SESSION
Module 8: Developing good learning habits and culture; measurement and impact	This module will focus on why a commitment to ongoing learning is so important work in contexts of complexity, and on tools for embedding learning at the level of the individual, team and system. It will also cover different approaches to measurement; measuring what matters without distorting performance; how to use measurement information to improve performance; and how to understand when and how you are having an impact.	Thursday 8th July, 9.30 - 11.30	Thursday 15th July, 9.30 - 12.00

**Before accessing any of the 'skills sessions' we would expect you to attend the live learning session or watch the recorded on-demand version of module 4 to give you a good basic knowledge.*

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For further information please contact ncouzens@activepartnerships.org