

Executive Lab Overview

Over the course of seven sessions, you will learn concepts and test out strategies and tools to elevate your leadership. The learning doesn't stop in the classroom, however – with the support of a mentor and your peers, you will identify how to apply these learnings in your role as an Executive Director.

We will invite a guest expert to speak at each session. You will be asked to share your questions and challenges ahead of time. Through application and reflection on your experiences, you will deepen your understanding and elevate your leadership.

Session 1: Personal Leadership

Effective leadership starts with self-awareness. In this session, you will develop a deeper understanding of your personal strengths, motivations and values, and how you can leverage them to effectively lead your organization.

As pre-work, you will be required to complete the Total SDI assessment. During the session, we will debrief the results of this assessment.

Session 2: Strategic and Visionary Leadership

As an Executive Director, you play a critical role in developing and implementing the strategic plan for your organization. We will begin the session by considering how you can work effectively with your board to develop your vision for your organization.

With your organizational vision in hand, we will turn our attention to implementing it. Key concepts we will cover include:

- How do you think strategically and plan in a constantly changing environment?
- How do you incorporate values and evidence in your decision making?
- Being a leader involves disruption – how do you lead change?

Session 3: Culture and Engagement

There's a famous saying that, "culture eats strategy for breakfast." In this session, we will look at strategies for shaping the culture at your organization so that it supports your organization's success.

We will consider:

- What is culture?
- How do you align your culture around your organization's vision, mission, and values?
- How can you build engagement and support performance?

Session 4: Building Your Team

How do you attract and keep the right people at your organization? In the first part of this session we will look at strategic people plans:

- What skills do you need on your team today, and what skills will you need over the next few years? How will your organization gain those skills?
- How do you plan for unexpected situations?
- When you are bringing on new team members, how do you ensure they are the right "fit"?

In the afternoon we will look at how to create healthy and progressive work environments that promote engagement and support diversity and inclusion.

Session 5: Setting Your Team Up for Success

In this session we will look at what is involved in supporting the performance of individual team members.

As part of this session there will be a Q&A session with an HR expert. This is your chance to ask all your burning HR questions!

Session 6: Getting the Most from Your Board

How do you get the most out of your board? Leading the organization is a shared responsibility between the board and the Executive Director. Throughout this session you will develop clarity around the role of your board, your role as an Executive Director, and how you can work together most effectively.

Session 7: Reflections and Next Steps

Developing your leadership skills is a life-long process. Hear from experienced Executive Directors about how they achieved success, and ask them questions about their journey. Clarify your next steps.

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