

Knowledge Leaders Program (formerly Emerging Leaders)

McMaster University is focused on cultivating human potential, leveraging the diverse talents of its employees and recognizing that everyone is a leader in their own role. This highly practical and engaging program, Knowledge Leaders, is designed for those who lead projects and/or people in their daily roles at McMaster.

The program helps to foster a culture of engagement, collaborative relationship building, and positive change through employee development. Key topics include:

- Creativity and innovation
- Problem identification and solution sourcing
- Enabling a positive workplace culture
- Managing projects with clear vision and effective communication
- A performance improvement model
- Leading teams through effective coaching

Session summaries are included below.

Eligibility

Employees are eligible provided they are employed: a) On a part-time or full-time continuing or contractually limited appointment of at least 1 year; or, b) Under the terms of a Collective Agreement, written contract or employment contract which specifically extends the Tuition Assistance benefit to employees.

Knowledge Leaders are operational team supervisors, or individual contributors, professionals or subject matter experts who regularly collaborate with project teams, committees or work groups, and may supervise students.

Application & Registration

Interested individuals must complete a program application through the Mosaic portal. Prior to initiating your application, ensure you are logged out of other Mosaic tabs or browsers. Once application materials are complete, CCE will review and notify applicants of their acceptance. Upon notification of acceptance, individuals must register for the program in Mosaic.

In summary, individuals who are accepted into the program must go through two stages using Mosaic: 1) apply and upon acceptance, 2) register. **See website for detailed Application & Registration steps.** <http://employecareers.mcmaster.ca/development/individual-development-plan/people-influencers-2/>

Format

35 contact hours

5 days in-class (9am-4pm); online & pre-session work^ (approx. 5 hours)

All materials, snacks and lunch are provided for in-class sessions.

^ Pre-session work may consist of individual assessments, articles/blogs, video clips, self-reflection exercises and will be administered using Avenue to Learn.

Parking fees are the responsibility of the participant (or their department).

Credential

A McMaster Certificate of Completion is awarded to participants who attend all sessions and complete all pre-work and in-class requirements.

Program Design

The cohort learning model of participants from various roles, employee groups, and departments allows participants to embark on a learning journey with their peers, act as a source of support for one another throughout the experience, and stay connected after the program ends. This program typically generates collaborative relationships, and participants leave the program with a new network within the University.

Assignments

Learning Transfer Plans *mandatory assignment

Participants will develop **Learning Transfer Plans** in consultation with their Supervisors/Managers and with support from the program facilitator during the program. A couple formats will be presented to participants. The purpose is to help transfer learning more effectively by asking participants and their supervisors to discuss opportunities to apply learning in their roles and identify areas for support.

Supervisors: Please note you will be asked to assist the participant with the Learning Transfer Plan.

Case – Problem Solving Project *mandatory assignment

Participants will identify a “problem” to solve in their role or department, and during the program they will experiment with the tools introduced to attempt a solution. Participants will be required to submit an outline/summary of their case for review, and an informal presentation will be made to peers in small groups on the final day of the program.

Session Summaries

Day One: Change Up Your Brainstorming

Learn how to enhance problem-solving effectiveness by developing skills in creativity, acquiring a number of valuable techniques, structuring the problem-solving process and nurturing an environment where everyone can participate in the problem-solving activity.

Purpose:

- To build strengths and skills in (re)defining problems and sourcing solutions.

Learning Outcomes:

- Explore why and how people differ in adapting to uncertainty and tackling puzzling challenges.
- Learn how to build a work environment that helps spark ideas, problem-solving and progress.
- Practice techniques that enable creativity and innovation.
- Develop a Learning Transfer Plan to use in this program.

Day Two: Trust, Teams and Purpose

Develop a model for understanding how to connect with others so you may effectively lead and manage personalities associated with your projects. Work with practical and transferable tools to build a commitment to supervising people and projects with positivity and quality decision making.

Purpose:

- To gain insight into enabling a positive workplace culture in association with factors that support highly motivated and productive teams.

Learning Outcomes:

- Deepen understanding of the real drivers of engagement and performance
- Learn how to put in place “structures” that support productive teamwork
- Practice techniques for building trust, accountability, and confidence to boost and sustain team capability and progress

Day Three: Getting Buy-In

What is your message? And how will you get buy-in and participation from all those that influence the success of your projects? Learn to communicate positively and effectively with stakeholders, inside and outside of complicated reporting structures, and adapt your speaking styles depending on the audience and the situation. Learn how to meet effectively with the right people, at the right time and with effective messaging to support your project agenda.

Purpose:

- To better manage projects through clear vision, stakeholder buy-in and effective communication.
- To introduce the PDCA cycle as a performance management and improvement mind set.

Learning Outcomes:

- Discuss importance of ‘Buy-In’
- Assess stakeholder influence and power
- Explain key communication principles and practices
- Explore factors for building strong teams
- Use conflict to enhance decision making and engagement
- Plan and conduct effective meetings
- Reflect on what performance means for individuals and teams.
- Learn to manage performance through the structured PDCA cycle of management

Day Four: Coaching, Influence and Connection

This highly interactive session will help you to develop a mindful approach to those you supervise in your role. You will understand when and why it is important to let go of tasks and to delegate them, and how to do this effectively. You will also add valuable coaching and feedback skills to your toolkit.

Purpose:

- To better lead project teams through effective delegation, coaching and influence.

Learning Outcomes:

- Explore and apply techniques to delegate effectively and create accountability and results
- Discuss sources of power and influencing strategies
- Link inspiration to influence
- Explain and practice essential coaching skills
- Apply skills and techniques for meaningful conversations
- Discuss change and strategies for coping
- Share recognition strategies
- Discuss career management tactics

Day Five: How Have You Moved the Dial?

In this final session, you'll focus on a few final "tricks" for your supervisory/project work, and pull the "sticky" ideas together so you know how you will apply them when you leave. Where will your talent take you? And how will you get there?

Purpose:

- To reinforce and integrate the leadership concepts and practices covered in days one to four.

Learning Outcomes:

- Test and deepen learning experiences
- Share individual experiences in trying out one or more leadership practices
- Use peer feedback and conversation to add to "soft power" skills
- Recognize and celebrate the learning gained during the program