



# Develop management and leadership skills in technical leads/supervisors

## World's third-largest software company

### Our level of responsibility

I was responsible for the total project—design, coordination and implementation of the 8-month program. Originally, I interfaced with the Training Manager, but before the project was rolled out, she left for a year's sabbatical. During the project, I interfaced with the HR Manager and Training Coordinator. I was the primary consultant who worked on this project, although I worked with 5 internal and external guest speakers/content specialists.

### Duration of the engagement

8 months

### The problem(s) presented to us

The problem was creating management and leadership skills in technical leads in a flat organization, with no supervisors, only leads and managers. Most of the leads had no human relations or management skills training, and little experience leading others. No training like this had ever been done at this level in this company.

### Our steps in solving the problem

- Held 2 focus groups to determine what the managers wanted their leads to learn, as well as what the leads themselves wanted to learn.
- Organized this input into 16 distinct learning modules, creating objectives and outlines for each session.
- Determined the timing of and spacing of each module so as not to disrupt the running of the business, but still ensure retention of learning.
- Refined the module objectives, content focus, and sequence with the Training Manager.
- Sent notification of the Leads Training Program to the managers. Received their registration for their leads.
- Ordered materials, created custom binders for materials.
- Held 16 half-day seminars (coordinated with guest speakers, when necessary). Created customized worksheets. Assigned pre-work for each session. Designed activities for each session.

### Results achieved

The managers reported that their participants displayed more confidence and willingly took on more responsibility as a result of this program. The participants initiated activities which relieved the managers of some of their tasks. The participants reported significantly better working relationships with their managers, team members, and contractors. The program was so successful, the company asked us to repeat it with two new groups. Within 12 months after completion, 90% of the graduating participants had been offered promotions.

Participants appreciated both the breadth of topics, and that the subject matter was focused on practical ideas they could use immediately in their work. They liked the cross-fertilization of ideas from other departments in the company. And they liked getting to know others with similar responsibilities.

## Morgan Seminar Group

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## Technical leaders participants' remarks

- “The most important outcome of this course was the clarification of the Team Lead role for my manager. Had I uncritically behaved according to the definitions of other Team Leads I’d met, I would not have met expectations. The simple exercise of setting specific guidelines gave me the confidence to make decisions on many occasions.

I appreciate the warmth, wisdom and good humor that Rebecca brought, session after session. She molded an agenda and atmosphere that stimulated, challenged and educated me. I appreciate that.”

—Dennis Kauffman

- “The one thing I am most proud to say about how I’ve grown since the beginning of this course, is that I have gained confidence. I believe in myself and my abilities. I know I can do a great job. And I know that this company will help me along and stand behind me.” —Steve Brunetto

- “I think the training program is beneficial to not just leads, but managers also. I have been aware of some of the leadership skills and theories through experience and previous interpersonal communication training, but this training strengthens my knowledge and also adds to it. I highly recommend this program to other colleagues.” —Lisa Choy

- “The past 8 months have been very exciting. We have covered so many topics and I have learned so much about myself—how to be a good lead, how to handle difficult employees, delegation, change at work—all of which I can apply to my job right away.

“I’ve learned a lot and would recommend managers take the program so they know as much as we do! A special thanks to Rebecca who makes learning fun and challenging. It’s been a pleasure to be in her program.” —Chi-Jen Fang

- “Overall, this was a fantastic experience for me and has given me some great leadership tools, as well as allowed me to work in teams with members of other divisions in the company, whom I otherwise wouldn’t have met. It was a terrific opportunity! —Megan Buck

- “I thought the course on a whole was extremely worth while taking. There were some very important pieces of information that I use and refer to daily. What I feel was most important was we learned about ourselves—how we think, feel and react. This is so important in leading others. If we know ourselves, we can see and understand others.” —Karen Winguth

- “I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to take this course. I hope my company continues to make this excellent course available to leads. The cost of the course is microscopic compared to the benefits!” —Liz McQuarrie

- “Out of the lead training program, I got a better understanding of my role, have total confidence in all my tasks, and deal with my team members with a much more effective approach. This program was very valuable to me and I truly believe my leadership skills have improved significantly.” —Anthony Lam

(Copies of the full text from which the above is excerpted is available upon request.)

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