

EMBO Solutions: Laboratory Leadership Course

3-DAY PHYSICAL COURSE

STYLE

The course is delivered in a workshop style (chairs in a semi-circle around the instructors). All content is delivered 'live' on flipcharts, with contributions (examples, experiences, ideas) from the participants captured directly and integrated into the course (photo notes of these flipcharts are shared after the course to supplement the course manual). For certain modules, practical demonstrations are used to illustrate concepts and techniques, and group work is undertaken to practice new approaches and tools. Because much of the course content is derived from the experience of the participants, and because it was developed by EMBO with professional leadership consultants, the course is tailored directly to the experience and professional needs of scientific researchers. The examples used are familiar and apt to the audience and of direct relevance to their leadership roles.

PROGRAMME

Please note that check-in to the hotel is the night BEFORE the first day of the course so that the course can begin promptly at 09.00am.

Schedule:

- All timings are approximate, as we will be working in a process-oriented manner. The time spent on a topic will expand or shrink to meet the needs of the course participants.
- We work from 09.00 to 17.30 on all days except the last day.
- On the last day we work until 16.30.
- We will take coffee breaks morning and afternoon, and we will have a lunch break together.

DAY I

60 mins - Welcome, Introduction, Warming up

Activity: Giving you time "to arrive" at the workshop and for our trainers to introduce the topics for the course. We open the "Parking Lot" for your questions and challenges.

Purpose: Some participants attend the workshop with a specific question or challenge in mind. In addition to helping everyone get to know one another and feel comfortable, the trainers collect the questions and challenges that participants want to address so that they can refer back to them throughout the course. This ensures that every participant gets the support and insight that they need.

60 mins -What is leadership?

Activity: You are invited to reflect on good leaders that you have known and to co-develop a definition of good leadership. You then reflect on your own day-to-day activities to determine for yourself how much of your work is about managing and how much is about leading, and what steps you can take to achieve the appropriate mix.

Purpose: Scientists tend to develop (project) management skills: the ability to set goals and plan and execute work to achieve those goals during their PhD. During the postdoctoral career phase (and especially once they are PIs) scientists need to take on more and more duties relating to leadership: creating a vision, influencing others to work towards it, and helping nurture and develop people along the way. This module ensures that everyone has an understanding of how much of their current role is leadership focused and, therefore, how much development they need to do.

120 mins - The leadership role

Activity: You are introduced to J.L. Moreno's 'Role Theory' and 'Role Atom' tool. You then use the Role Atom to analyse the different roles you play on a daily basis, identify which are important for your success and which are comfortable and uncomfortable for you and why. You then work on a plan to develop yourself in those roles that are important but uncomfortable.

Purpose: The course aims to build on the existing strengths of participants and help them begin to address some of their weaknesses. The Role Atom is one tool to identify which of the things a person does that are important to their success in their job, and which are less important. It also helps an individual work out which roles they avoid or do less well because they feel uncomfortable. This can contribute to a development plan. For example: "I know I have to write grants, but I feel uncomfortable doing so because I don't have very much experience. How could I improve?". The tool is also useful to support the people we lead in the same way, or to set their expectations about the roles we are emphasising and how we will perform them.

90 mins - The impact of working environment

Activity: You are invited to take on the perspectives of the different groups in your working environment: lab members, PIs, leadership team (e.g. director of institute). The trainers then facilitate a discussion between these three groups. After the discussion, you and your group capture the expectations you heard articulated by the other groups and discuss when and how to raise these expectations.

Purpose: The environment in which we lead has an impact on the way in which we execute our leadership role. Being aware and respectful of the different perspectives and expectations in that environment is critical to success. Deliberately taking on the perspective of another person can expand our thinking around challenges and opportunities, as well as make us more aware of, and therefore more likely to fulfill, the expectations that our staff and our leaders have of us.

45 mins - Emotional Intelligence

Activity: You are introduced to the concept of Emotional Intelligence and given an opportunity to reflect on your own emotions and behaviour in the context of the model.

Purpose: Self-awareness - our emotions, how we experience them, and what behaviour results from them; Self-management - our ability to find alternative responses to emotional situations to be more comfortable and more effective; Social awareness - how empathetic we are and how much we notice about our colleagues; Relationship management - how able we are to use our awareness to improve

our relationships by adapting our own behaviour to support others. All of these skills are critical in a leadership role as we take on greater responsibility for the well-being and success of others, which carries for us an emotional cost as well. We look at the concept of Emotional Intelligence to orient ourselves towards emotions and behaviour as we move forward in the course.

45 mins - The impact of personality on leadership - Part 1

Activity: You are introduced to a particular personality model, the Instinctual Bias, to help you develop your own Emotional Intelligence and increase your awareness and understanding of your colleagues. You reflect on how aware you are of your different responsibilities and areas of work, and how you take care of them (or struggle to), using this tool as the analytical and creative lens.

Purpose: Personality colours how we perceive the world and how we accordingly act, both under normal and stress conditions. Understanding this gives us clues about our natural strengths and potential de-railers for our leadership. Participants are encouraged to think about the value of different perspectives and personality types and understand that diversity is a key ingredient in a highly successful team.

DAY II

15 mins - Welcome, Warming up

Activity: The group reflects on the previous day, the trainers answer any burning questions, and orient to group toward the new day's work

Purpose: To ensure that the group can move forward with the work today, the trainers spend a short amount of time taking questions and reflections about the previous day.

100 mins - The impact of personality on leadership - Part 2

Activity: You continue your exploration of personality models as tools to support you in developing your awareness and strategies for improving well-being, relationships and work. You are introduced to the Enneagram of Personality and given an opportunity to work in small groups to share your awareness and understanding. You develop strategies to solve challenges you are facing using the Enneagram as the analytical and creative lens to do so.

Purpose: The Enneagram of Personality clusters personalities based on 9 strategies for moving through life, driven by our fundamental emotional needs. Understanding the focus of our attention and the way that focus drives behaviour helps us reflect on our habitual behaviours and strategies, and look for alternate and more effective approaches to challenges where our default strategies (or those of others) are less effective or work against us.

60 mins - Working with values

Activity: You are encouraged to reflect on the values present in your work environment, and then to select and discuss 4 or 5 values that you would like to cultivate in your laboratories (or among the people you are leading) to ensure productive, fulfilling work. You are introduced to a strategy for implementing these values in you group or small team.

Purpose: Working to a set of shared values can improve the efficiency of teams, improve the effectiveness of decision-making and reduce conflict. An awareness of the intrinsic values that

operate in the workplace can help us to operate more effectively with colleagues. Developing and nurturing a positive set of values for our laboratories or teams can help our people to work more efficiently and effectively, especially in multi-national environments.

45 mins - Motivation

Activity: You are introduced to F. Herzberg's 2-factor motivation model and are encouraged to reflect on the barriers to your own motivation. You are shown how to use the model to help yourself and your people achieve higher levels of self-motivation.

Purpose: Low motivation is often attributable to external factors about the work or the environment or the work itself. This tool helps leaders diagnose what is leading to low motivation states in themselves or others, and then to look for effective solutions that will enable people to feel more motivated.

60 mins - Giving feedback and criticism

Activity: You are introduced to a tool for giving feedback on positive and negative behaviour. You are encouraged to help develop a culture of giving and receiving feedback within your group. You are given an opportunity to practise using this tool by preparing and giving feedback that is meaningful to you.

Purpose: Feedback that is given well can help us and our colleagues address our areas of unawareness (behaviour that is unhelpful to our success). By giving and being open to receiving feedback, we can improve trust and productivity in teams. One challenge with giving feedback is that it can feel uncomfortable and can trigger strong emotions. This tool supports the giver and receiver to manage their emotions and provides a structured, effective framework to ensure the feedback is meaningful and has an impact.

120 mins - Communication

Activity: You are introduced to E. Bern's Transactional Analysis model of communication. You are encouraged to consider emotion a normal part of communicating and working with others, and to understand that the emotional content of a conversation needs to be handled with awareness, empathy and skill (for yourself and the other). You then work in small groups to practice challenging conversations using the model with the support of the trainers.

Purpose: All successful leaders are effective communicators. A common challenge to effective communication is being aware of your own emotional state and that of your conversation partner, and preparing a strategy for difficult conversations. This module aims to help participants understand and manage their own emotions and needs during a conversation, to be more aware of the emotions and needs of their partner, and to think more strategically about achieving their goals. This tool is also particularly useful in beginning to think about and plan challenging conversations around developing independence and planning how to move on from the current lab.

DAY III

30 mins - Welcome, Warming up

Activity: The group reflects on the previous day, the trainers answer any burning questions, and orient to group toward the new day's work

Purpose: To ensure that the group can move forward with the work today, the trainers spend a short amount of time taking questions and reflections about the previous day.

120 mins - Conflict in the lab

Activity: You are introduced to F. Glasl's model of conflict, as well as other aspects of conflict theory and resolution. You will then work through a conflict case (provided by yourself or another member of the group), applying the theory to a real situation in support of someone in the group.

Purpose: Conflict is often only a problem if nothing is done about it. This module encourages participants to view conflict as normal and solvable and provides tools and ideas to help them do that. By taking action and resolving conflict, leaders can avoid the downsides (loss of productivity, bad feelings) and take advantage of the energy, ideas and change that conflict can bring once it is resolved effectively.

80 mins - Team dynamics

Activity: You are introduced to B. Tuckman's model of team development. You are then invited to consider the practical steps you could take at each stage of your group's development.

Purpose: Leaders need to be aware of the dynamics in their team and to respond appropriately at different stages in your team's development. Participants also see how to deal with the high fluctuation rates in research teams to ensure that work remains on track and published, even when people leave.

45 mins - Delegation

Activity: You learn about situational leadership and how to use it to adapt the way you delegate specific tasks to different people. You are also given an opportunity to reflect on how you prioritise your own work and the work you are given by others.

Purpose: All leaders need to be able to delegate work that they don't have time for or that would be better done by someone else. However, each member of staff will have different levels of skill and willingness to do different tasks. Delegation therefore requires that the leader understands their people well enough to know how much support and encouragement they will need to complete a given task. When we are given work by others, we often sideline our own plans in favour of their priorities. An awareness of how we prioritise and protect our own work can help us to take on - or refuse - additional work more mindfully and more skillfully.

45 mins - Who's got the monkey? (developing problem-solving skills and independence in your people)

Activity: You learn a method related to coaching that helps you to help your people solve their own simple problems. You are given an opportunity to play with this tool.

Purpose: Some problems the leader needs to solve, and for many problems, your people could solve them themselves if they thought about it. This method helps leaders work out which problems could be solved without their involvement and provides a method to help staff members think critically and learn to problem-solve themselves. This frees up some of the leaders's time to solve more complex problems and do more impactful work.

30 mins - Wrap-up and Next Steps

Activity: You reflect on the course and what you have learned. You are given an opportunity to begin to develop an action plan to implement some of your new knowledge.

Purpose: The course is packed with new information, models and tools. Participants need to implement what they have learned at a pace that is comfortable for them and their people. So that they don't forget what they have learned or the thoughts they had about applying it during the course, they are provided with a structure to help them plan strategies for implementation at a later date.

30 mins - Course Close

We say goodbye and close the course.

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