

LEADERSHIP MATTERS

A Public Leadership Learning Program for New England and its Citizens

Vision Statement

Leadership Matters is a leadership development program for leaders both public service and elected who are in municipal and state government, public education, and non-profit organizations (the social sector). The program includes formal classroom work, mentored practice in the workplace, the completion of an innovations project, and a forum of shared best practices. Leadership Matters builds capacity for public leaders to achieve outcomes that serve the public good and sustain the resources (human, natural and economic) on which citizens depend on to thrive.

Public leadership is a profession that requires people who are experienced and knowledgeable in their work. To that end we support leaders who create workplaces where employees

- *want to work and learn*
- *produce quality products and services for the public good*
- *treat the citizens they serve as partners*
- *feel that the public institutions where they work are worthy of their highest aspirations*

Program

Leadership Matters provides training to leaders who seek advanced management and leadership skills and the opportunity to apply those skills through an “innovations project” in their own community. The program is delivered in three phases:

- **Phase I:** Participating communities send teams of four individuals, typically the town manager or mayor and three others, to eight days of training over five months. This **classroom portion** of the program features practical instruction and practice of skills in facilitative leadership; systems thinking; negotiation; and aligning systems for high performance outcomes.
- **Phase II:** Participants are required to create **innovation project** teams in their home-organizations in order to tackle persistent, high-priority challenges. Participants will be expected to apply the skills learned to re-invent systems and structures that are currently producing outcomes that need improvement. Leadership Matters will support these efforts with mentoring from successful leaders who will coach, critique, encourage, and advise. Mentoring will be provided to the project teams by consultants and faculty from the Public Sector Consortium.
- **Phase III:** Participants return for a day-long **innovation conference**—to share what worked, what didn’t, and to begin building a culture of collaboration and mutual support across communities.

The programs in this curriculum have been tested with leaders in the social sector for over twenty-five years and are designed for relevance and performance outcomes. The programs will be offered in four two-day increments between September 2022 and January 2024 in the Boston

area at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy in Cambridge, Ma and in Newport, RI at the Pell Center at Salve Regina University.

Leadership Matters Stewards

Leadership Matters will rely on public leaders to serve as Stewards in the development and leadership of their participating teams (from municipalities, state agencies, school departments, non-profit organizations).

Stewards in this program are seasoned experts in their fields who willingly mentor and support innovative system re-designs that will support better outcomes and performance.

Steward responsibilities include:

- Nominate four people, including themselves, from the organization to participate in Leadership Matters.
- Attend the four Leadership Matters courses, offered over a five-month period in two-day increments.
- Identify the systems reinvention issue or problem the community will address.
- Identify how success will be measured.
- Present both the successes and failures of their innovation or reinvention efforts to colleagues at the annual innovation conference.

Courses and Learning Objectives

Facilitation Strategies Learning Objectives

- Learn the underlying principles and core practices of leaders.
- Develop core facilitation skills through hands-on practice and feedback.
- Gain strategies for starting any group interaction and maintaining civility.
- Learn to structure empowerment and responsibility when using group decision making.
- Practice strategies for dealing with resistance and distractions.
- Experience intervention tools for bringing projects and teams back on track.
- Learn how to manage meeting energy and ensure full participation.
- Use a planning template designed to ensure effective meetings.
- Use facilitation methodologies and strategies to maintain meeting effectiveness and improve projects and teams.
- Leave the program prepared to apply the leadership practices.

Systems Thinking Learning Objectives

- Learn the value of systems thinking as an essential practice for citizen/public leaders.
 - Develop competency in mapping systems and using the diagrams to engage others in creating a shared understanding of the current reality facing them.
 - Discover how thoughts, assumptions and beliefs (mental models) play a significant role in what we see and hear and how this affects the organizational systems of which we are a part.
 - Understand systemic accumulations and delays as a means of developing leadership capacity for foresight and intervention before the crisis occurs.
 - Learn the language of systems thinking and the significance of questions that help others to think and act systemically.
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- Understand the purpose of public leadership as it relates to the role in avoiding the Tragedy of the Commons (a systems archetype).
- Experience learning by doing and practice.
- Gain significant progress in mapping systems and use focused inquiry to gain a better understanding of a workplace challenge.

Negotiation Strategies Learning Objectives

- Establish a negotiation framework for understanding the dynamics, steps, and skills for effective negotiation.
- Practice and improve upon key skills in negotiation.
- Improve the analysis of and preparation for negotiations.
- Apply general negotiation concepts to specific workplace examples and challenges.
- Receive peer feedback on negotiation skills and strategy.

Strategic Alignment for High Performance

- Learn the importance of a whole system approach to organizational performance.
- Learn how to create inspirational work environments and overcome structural barriers to achieve results.
- Learn what is required when complexity increases, external conditions shift and systems/structures don't support your goals and mission.
- Learn the importance of strategic leadership partnerships and interdependent leadership skills.
- Learn to write outcome-based performance metrics that identify the end-users, measures, indicators, and assumptions for work and stretch goals.
- Learn how to write an outcome-based strategy for your unit that is aligned with your organizational mission and strategic plan.
- Learn the use of creative tension and organizational learning tools in achieving mission results.

Resources and Community of Practice

Graduates of the Leadership Matters curriculum become part of a growing, socially networked community of leaders and innovators.

Through this forum, public leaders can participate in online dialogues. Topics are relevant to the work and challenges facing public leaders. Community leaders and students may decide to create their own Community of Practice and design topics of relevance to them as a result of their participation in the Leadership Matters program

As part of its on-going learning support for leaders, the Public Sector Consortium provides an extensive leadership bibliography which is updated regularly and organized by areas of competency and expertise. For more information, see http://www.public-sector.org/publications_and_resources.html

Measuring Success

Ultimately, the success of Leadership Matters will be measured not simply by the number of participants who complete the curriculum, but in the money saved by municipal and state governments, the efficiencies and improved services achieved, and improved leadership across communities.

Instructors

Instructors from the Public Sector Consortium are seasoned professionals. Many of the instructors have published extensively and all of them have experience in working with public sector leaders. Each course is taught by two instructors, including a “content lead” with extensive knowledge in the field and understanding of the principles of adult learning. The second instructor is generally the “context lead,” someone with experience as a public-sector leader/manager who can provide examples of how the content can be effectively used and applied in public sector workplaces. In most of these instructor partnerships there is at least fifty years of professional experience present in the classroom.

Costs

Tuition for the eight days of classroom work **phase one** is \$10,000.00 for each team of four leaders. The base cost for **phase two** is \$15,000.00 and lasts for eight to ten months. The PSC and its partners work to find grants or donations to cover these costs for each participating team. The exact amount of the funds raised cannot be guaranteed.

About The Public Sector Consortium www.public-sector.org

The Public-Sector Consortium is a multi-service non-profit committed to working with citizens and leaders to “re-invent the practice of public leadership.” Our efforts are focused on developing leaders and managers who have the capacity to effectively manage and lead large complex public institutions that serve the public good. The Public Sector Consortium offers formal learning programs that are only one part of a system of learning which includes on-site consulting, and coaching services. Our goal is to translate the management and leadership practices from the best schools and learning institutions in the world into relevant tools for public sector leaders. The Public Sector Consortium is also committed to increasing the value our society places on quality public sector leadership, while recognizing the value and leverage potential of robust interactions between all sectors—public, for-profit, and non-profit.