

## Course Outline

### An Online Team Leadership Course for Young Water Professionals

January 2016

#### Learning objectives

This course aims to provide water professionals with a modular, asynchronous, online training course to build understanding, skills and confidence in the following topics:

- An introduction to leadership in the water sector - fundamental concepts.
- An introduction to leadership development - principles and methods.
- An introduction to self-leadership as the foundation for all other forms of leadership development.
- Team leadership – fundamental concepts and tools.
- Leading cross-boundary teams in the water sector, including virtual teams.

Its primary focus is to strengthen the ability of participants to engage in forms of **team leadership** that are common in the water sector, whilst recognising that in order to adequately address team leadership participants need to firstly build some foundation knowledge and skills.

#### Target audience

The primary target audience is water professionals who currently lead project teams and/or a team of staff. In particular, the course would be most helpful to newly appointed team leaders and people who lead cross-boundary teams (e.g. teams that cross boundaries in terms of geography, professional discipline, culture, organisational units, etc.). The course has been designed for a class of 15 to 25 participants with some practical experience of leading teams of staff (direct reports) and/or project teams, and who have opportunities to practice new approaches to team leadership.

Water practitioners with no experience leading teams and no current access to team leadership roles, can still participate in this course but would find some of the exercises and recommendations more challenging. In particular, this course places an emphasis on 'learning by doing'. That is, applying tips and tools from the course to real team leadership challenges, in conjunction with getting feedback and support from colleagues. Accordingly, it is important that participants who want to greatly benefit from this course have ready access to team leadership 'practice fields' either at work or outside of work (e.g. in a community group, sporting association, professional association, etc.).

#### Course design

The course consists of three modules spread over 4 consecutive weeks. It will be run in April and September each year. The weekly activities are described below.

##### Week 1: Introductions and accessing course materials

- Participants will be given access to a secure, online learning management system (i.e. the University of Queensland's Blackboard system), and asked to introduce themselves to other class members through an online introductory exercise. Like all other online activities in this course, this

will be asynchronous (i.e. participants would not need to be online at the same time) and will be moderated by the IWC course facilitator.

- Participants will be provided with access to all course materials (videos and readings) in digital form.
- Materials provided in week one:
  - This course overview document (PDF).
  - A welcome and overview video from the International Water Centre (IWC) (MP4 video file).
- Time commitment for participants: ~1-2 hours.

### **Week 2: Module 1 - introduction to leadership in the water sector and leadership development**

- This module will address the definition of leadership, fundamental concepts, the significance of leadership in the water sector, as well as principles and methods of leadership development.
- Participants will be required to watch two videos (presentations by the IWC), read two papers, participate in an online discussion activity and conduct a short multiple-choice online quiz.
- Materials provided in week two:
  - Two videos / presentations (MP4 video files) with supporting handouts containing the presentation slides (PDFs).
  - Two readings (PDFs).
- Time commitment for participants: ~2-3 hours.

### **Week 3: Module 2 - introduction to self-leadership**

- This module will focus on the fundamentals of self-leadership, as all leadership development journeys should start at this point. It will describe self-leadership, and cover key topics such as personal values, building resilience, being a reflective practitioner, and managing one's career.
- Participants will be required to watch one video (presentation by the IWC), read two papers, participate in an online discussion activity and conduct a short multiple-choice online quiz.
- Materials provided in week three:
  - A video / presentation (MP4 video file) and supporting handout (PDF).
  - Two readings (PDFs).
- Time commitment for participants: ~2-3 hours.

### **Week 4: Module 3 - team leadership**

- This module will explore the nature of teams and team leadership (using the 'functional approach'). It will provide several tools that participants could use to better lead teams. It will also address leading cross-boundary teams, including virtual teams.
- Participants will be required to watch two videos (presentations by the IWC), read three papers, participate in an online discussion activity and conduct a short multiple-choice online quiz.
- Participants wishing to gain a Certificate of Completion will also be required to complete and submit a short 'Reflection Report'. This report helps to build self-awareness, and to identify specific ways in which new knowledge and tools can be used to produce positive leadership outcomes and accelerate learning. A report template with guidelines will be provided. An extra week will be provided for participants to prepare this report (i.e. by the end of Week 5).

- Materials provided in week four:
  - Two videos / presentations (MP4 video files) and supporting handouts (PDFs).
  - Three readings (PDFs).
  - A reflection report template with guidelines (Word document).
- Optional activity: At the completion of week four, participants will also be asked to complete a 5 min, voluntary and anonymous online feedback survey to help improve the course over time.
- Time commitment for participants: ~4 hours. An additional 1 hour would be required to complete the optional Reflection Report.

### **Contact for further information on the design or content**

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