McKinsey & Company

Forward

Foundation Level Participant Handbook

Name:

Welcome to Forward!

We are excited to welcome you to McKinsey Forward.

Designed for young professionals, this learning and development journey will equip you with a broad set of practical skills to boost your career and thrive in your current and future roles.

Forward consists of **3 levels of learning**. The more you engage and progress, the more knowledge and experiences you can unlock.

Throughout the program, you are expected to invest around **2 hours per week** to take in the complete learning and embed it into your day-to-day life.

This handbook is for the first level of **Forward – the Foundation Level.**

The handbook is designed to **serve as a canvas for you to capture ideas, reflections and insights** during and after the program. Write your name on the front cover and make it your own!

We hope you will embark on your journey energized and motivated, with personal learning intentions to help you achieve the results you desire.

Contents

Forward is designed over three levels. Complete transition criteria by the deadline to unlock higher levels of learning

Foundation level (L1)

You are here

- Welcome Webinar
- Digital courses
  - Adaptability & Resilience
  - Problem Solving (part 1)
  - Communicating with Impact (part 1)
  - Digital Essentials
- Reflections and feedback
  — Reflections & Intentions Blog
  — 360 skills assessment

Supported with:
- Weekly progress emails
- Discussion boards

Unlock by completing:

- All digital content
- Self-assessment and nominees' feedback
- Learning Reflections and Intentions Blog
- Verification documents

Advanced level (L2)

- Digital courses
  - Problem Solving (part 2)
  - Communicating with Impact (part 2)
- Virtual learning events
  - Lead Forward
  - Think Forward
- Group assignment
- End of program quiz

Supported with
- Weekly progress emails
- Q&A sessions by McKinsey coach for group work
- Discussion boards

Unlock by completing:

- All digital courses
- 2 virtual learning events
- Group assign-ment
- End of program quiz

Network level (L3)

- Expand your network
  — Forward Alumni group
  — Virtual network-ing events
- Further your growth
  — Peer mini-boards
  — Booster webinars
  — Food for thought
- Shape the future of Forward
  — Becoming Forward faculty
  — Driving outreach
  — Co-developing activities

Supported with
- Expert interviews/ fireside chat
- Regular newsletter

Content and activities in the Forward journey fall under 3 topics, mapped to the most critical Future of Work skills

Lead Yourself & Others

Applying social and emotional skills to build adaptability and develop authentic relationships

Conquer Business Challenges

Using structured thinking tools to solve complex challenges and communicating messages with impact

Navigate the Digital World

Understanding and applying new ways of working and thinking in an increasingly digital world

The McKinsey & Company content in store for you…

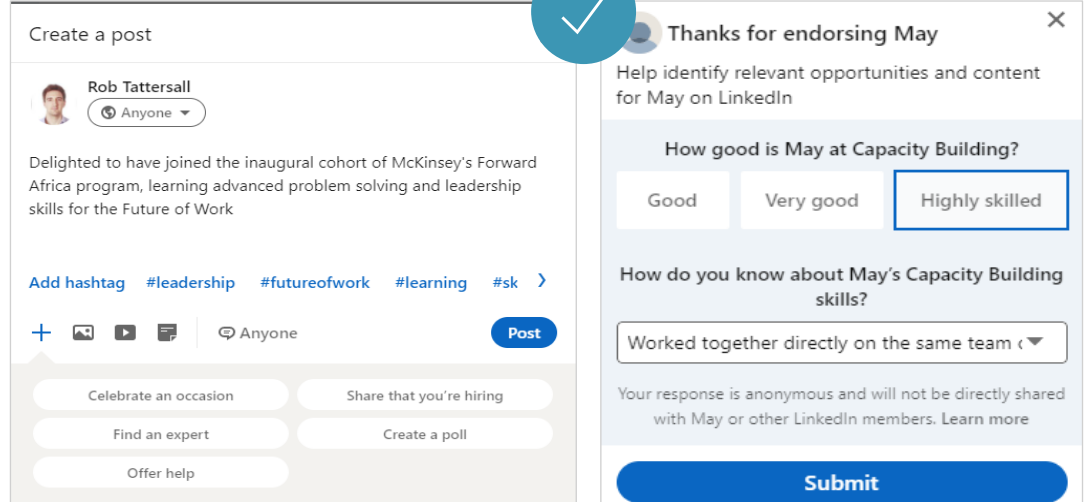|	Learning components	Details
L1	**Adaptability & Resilience (digital course)**	• Recognize and shift own mindset patterns about learning • Apply personalized learning tools and strategies • Build resilience and emotional flexibility to persist in your learning journey • Apply techniques to best enable an effective team learning environment
	Problem Solving Part 1 (digital course)	• Introduction to McKinsey's problem solving approach • Focus on defining challenging problems, prioritizing issues
	Communicating for Impact Part 1 (digital course)	• Introduction to structuring arguments using pyramid principle • Tailoring arguments to address audience needs, crafting inspiring prose
	Digital Essentials (digital course)	• Articulate what is "digital", why it matters and how it creates value • Build your digital "toolkit" through building foundational literacy • Create positive mindset around digital
L2	**Problem Solving Part 2 (digital course)**	• Focus on synthesizing findings and developing actionable recommendations
	Communicating for Impact Part 2 (digital course)	• Delivering messages with personal presence and style
	Lead Forward (workshop)	• Understand yourself and how to build inner agility and resilience • Apply valuable techniques to deepen relationships with others
	Think Forward (workshop)	• Gaining inspiration to adopt new ways of working and thinking • Exploring and experiencing what is different with these new concepts in your professional life
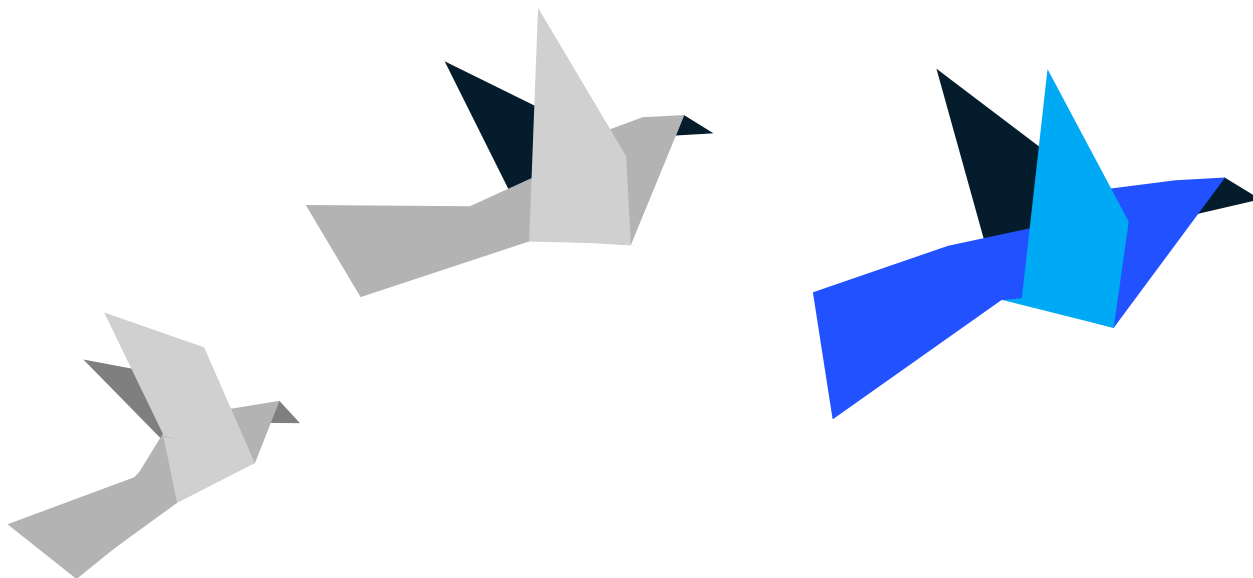
Please by mindful of how you share your Forward journey publicly

Example

If you like, you can celebrate your journey in the program on social media…
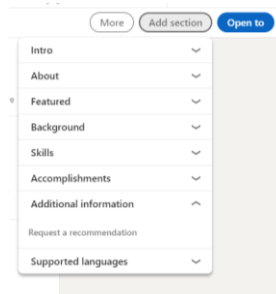
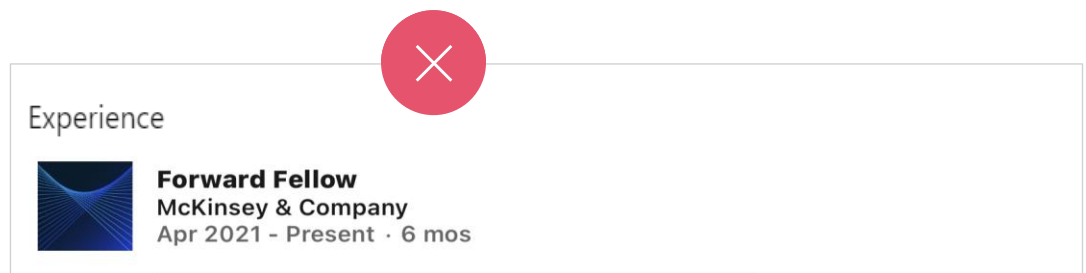E.g. by writing a post about the skills you are learning or endorsing your teammate's skills

When you complete the program, you can add it in the relevant section
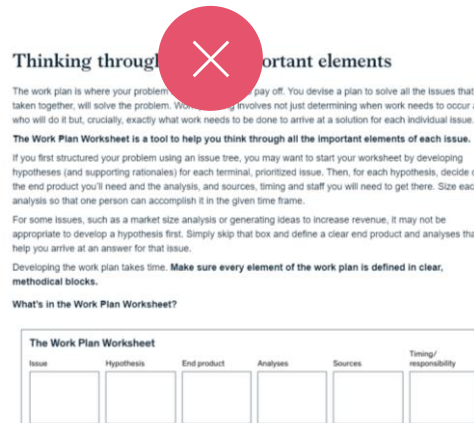
E.g. adding to skills or accomplishments in your CV

…But please do not describe your participation in the program wrongfully as a job/employment or of fellowship with McKinsey

… **and do not share any screenshots or copies of the proprietary content** (all courses, resources and documents) in **respect the terms of use and confidentiality notices which you have accepted** when you enrolled in program

Contents

Foundation Level Planner

Below is the list of activities that you will encounter during the Foundation Level. Use this checklist to **mark your progress along the learning journey.**

Item	Description	Duration	Where
☐ Welcome webinar	Online webinar with program team and peers	1 hour	Zoom link through email
☐ Introduction video	Introductory video on the journey	15 minutes	Online Platform
☐ Adaptability & Resilience Digital Course	5 fully digital self-paced lessons	3-4 hours	Online Platform
☐ Problem Solving Digital Course (Part 1)	3 fully digital self-paced lessons	3-4 hours	Online Platform
☐ Communicating for Impact Digital Course (Part 1)	4 fully digital self-paced lessons	3-4 hours	Online Platform
☐ Digital Essentials Digital Course	7 fully digital self-paced lessons	2-3 hours	Online Platform
☐ Learning reflections and intentions blog	Submit Learning reflections and intentions blog	35 minutes	Online Platform
☐ Feedback survey	End of L1 feedback survey	10 minutes	Online Platform
☐ 360 skills assessment – self-assessment	Online tool a tool to reflect on your future of work skills	15 minutes	Link through email
☐ 360 skills assessment - nominees' feedback	Online tool to gather feedback from those who know you well	15 minutes	Link through email
☐ Suggested reading	Additional content to reinforce topics	40-45 minutes	Online Platform

Contents

Adaptability & Resilience Digital Course

What to Expect

The 3 – 4 hour **Adaptability & Resilience** digital course aims to increase the ability of individuals to learn so that they can better react, adjust and perform across all kinds of situations.

Learning objectives

- Recognize and shift own mindset patterns about learning
- Apply personalized learning tools & strategies
- Build resilience and emotional flexibility to persevere in your learning journey
- Apply techniques to best enable an effective team learning environment.

Lessons

Lesson 1: Introduction
Discover the skills you will build as part of Adaptability & Resilience

Lesson 2: Setting Learning Intentions
Set effective learning intentions to make the most each learning opportunity

Lesson 3: Developing Mindsets
Learn about and take on powerful, adaptable mindsets
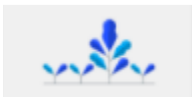
Lesson 4: Building Learning Habits
Adopt habits that will lead to better learning and adaptability
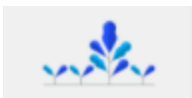
Lesson 5: Developing Psychological Safety
Learn how to create a team environment that drives well-being and performance

Adaptability & Resilience Digital Course

Key Concept: Setting Learning Intentions

We live in a complex world with more stimuli than we can possibly process. Setting learning intentions helps us to cut through the noise and stay focused on what we've identified as personally important.

There are two specific, subtle ways in which we can frame our intentions – our direction forward – that support both our ability to learn and the likelihood that we'll enjoy the experience.

Focus on the journey

Frame your desired outcome as a learning intention versus a performance goal.

Good learning intentions prioritize the experience itself, not just the outcome. Instead of focusing on a specific target, they focus on:

- The process
- Discovering and exploring new ideas
- Our growth.

Link to meaning

Connect your learning to something that is personally meaningful to you.

Taking the time to make this connection will help you learn better and have more fun in the process. Questions you might ask yourself include:

- When things get hard, what keeps me motivated?
- What makes me feel fulfilled and proud?

Adaptability & Resilience Digital Course

Try it yourself → *Setting meaningful intentions*

Write a learning intention

I want to **<insert explore/practice/discover/understand/learn/develop>** how to <insert a capability/skill/mindset/attribute>, because **<insert something that's meaningful/important to you>.**

→ Set a calendar reminder for 2-3 weeks from now and include your learning intention. When that alarm goes off, check in with yourself on your progress

→ Check in with your manager: Share some of your intentions and get feedback and/or ask them to share some upcoming stretch opportunities

Actions to explore Ideas for bringing your learning intention to life

→ Have a chat over coffee with a colleague and tell them about your learning intentions and the meaning behind them. Share some ways you plan to act on your learning intentions (perhaps signing up for a course, taking on a new task, or connecting to experts) and ask if they have any other suggestions

→ Forget work for just a second. What's something you've been wanting to do in your personal life? Go and find an accountability partner or group

What will you do? Pick an action from the list above or think of a different action you want to try.

How did it go? Once you've taken the action, reflect on the experience.

Contents

Problem Solving Digital Course (Part 1)

What to Expect

The 3-4 hour **Problem Solving** digital course introduces McKinsey's approach to problem solving and aims to bring a perspective to tackle problems that can be used in a business environment.

Learning objectives

- Develop a rigorous and structured approach to problem solving and improve your ability to define challenging problem
- Discover McKinsey's problem solving approach
- Focus on defining challenging problems, prioritizing issues

Lessons

Lesson 1: McKinsey's approach to problem solving
Define problem solving and learn how using a structured approach can improve your effectiveness at solving problems

Discussion: Current barriers and approach

Visit the discussion forum to check in on the conversation

Lesson 2: A Structured Approach to Problem Solving

Explore 5 structured problem solving approaches and deep-dive on the hypothesis-led approach

Lesson 3:Define the Problem

Get up to speed on the first step of the hypothesis-led approach to problem solving: Define the problem

Problem Solving Digital Course (Part 1)

Key Concept: 7 steps of problem solving

1

Define problem

Debate and agree as a team on definition of core problem

2

Structure problem and generate ideas

Identify the best problem-solving approach

3

Prioritize issues

Identify and rank issues in order of importance

4

Plan analyses and work

Define work plan to seek solutions to pressing issues

5

Conduct analyses

Use the most appropriate analytic tools

6

Synthesize findings

Arrive at key insights using "so-what" line of reasoning

7

Develop recommen-dations

Articulate key recommen-dations for the right audience

Problem Solving Digital Course (Part 1)

Try it yourself ⊙→ *Developing a problem statement*

Read the mini-case study below and develop a SMART problem statement

DevCo works under the European Commission to build partnerships for change in developing countries

- The European Commission's directorate-general for International Development and Cooperation (DevCo) provides support and financing for developing countries to increase their capacity to protect and manage natural resources.

- This includes working with governments, public and private sector, and civil society organizations to:

  — Combat illegal logging;

  — Manage and secure protected areas that are home to endangered wildlife such as gorillas, rhinos and elephants;

  — Remedy and clean up polluted sites, and build local skills to develop a sustainable green economy, among many other areas.

- Currently they are working towards reducing air pollution in Asian cities (especially in India). Periodically, global cities are evaluated on their level of polluted air. Upcoming list will be published in 2025 and it is important that Asian cities works towards reducing air pollution to avoid being on the list of 100 most polluted cities.

Specific, not general
Measurable
Action-oriented
Relevant (to the key problem)
Time-bound

Problem statement:

Contents

Communicating for Impact Digital Course (Part 1)

What to Expect

The 3-4 hour **Communicating for Impact** digital course focuses on how to synthesize and tailor communications, verbally and visually.

Learning objectives

- Learn a valuable tool – EPIC!
- Learn about the pyramid principle to structuring arguments
- Tailor messages to address audience needs

Lessons

Lesson 1: Introduction
Explore the EPIC approach to communications to help move your audience to action

Discussion: Which speakers do you find inspiring?
Visit the discussion forum to check in on the conversion

Lesson 2: Connect with your audience
Practice empathy in order to build a strong foundation for your communications

Lesson 3: Orient towards an objective
Sharpen focus on the purpose of your communications

Lesson 4: Structure an argument
Apply a process-based approach to developing and structuring communications

Communicating for Impact
Digital Course (Part 1)

Key Concept: The pyramid principle

The pyramid structure allows your audience to understand the general message and have contextual information about the details

Governing thought

Key line
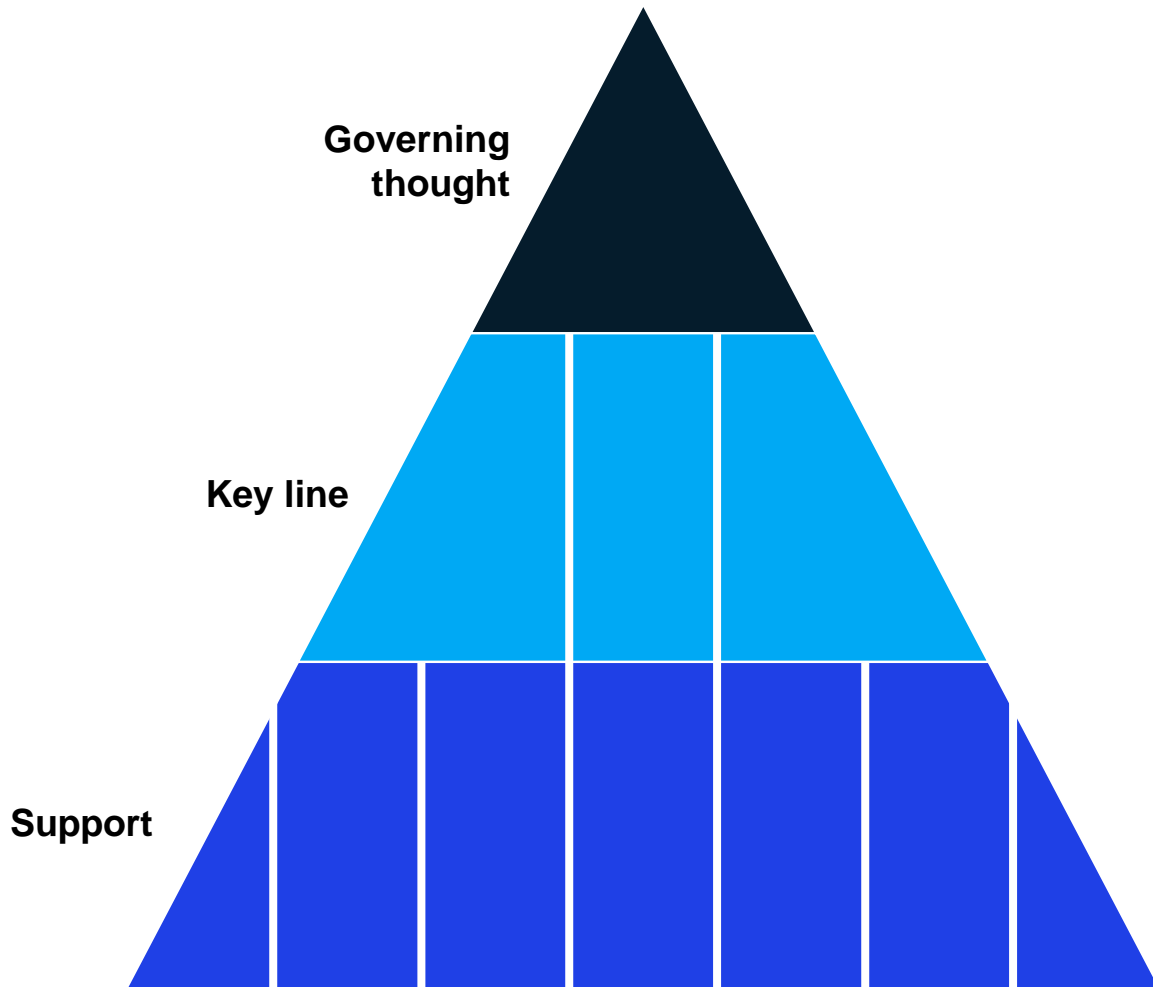
Support

Characteristics of good pyramids

- Relevant governing thought
- Question-answer dialogue from top to bottom
- One message (complete idea) stated in complete sentence per box
- Logical equivalence of horizontal ideas
- Logical order of supporting points

Communicating for Impact
Digital Course (Part 1)
Try it yourself ⟶ *Using deduction technique*

- Read the governing thought and attributes of information provided below
- Construct a pyramid with three levels on your flipchart
  — Group and organize the information
  — Assemble the information in three groups of 'Action/Reason'
  — Name each 'Action/Reason' group.

Governing thought is "We should go on holiday in Langkawi "

Attributes of Langkawi that make it an attractive tourist destination:

1. Availability of multiple flights

2. Plenty of recreational options including water sports, jungle trekking and golf

3. Budget airlines fly to Langkawi

4. We have never held an offsite there

5. Hotels are reasonably priced

6. Only 1 hour flight from Kuala Lumpur making for an easy getaway

7. Langkawi offers many budget-friendly restaurants

8. Beautiful, untouched beaches that provide an inspiring environment
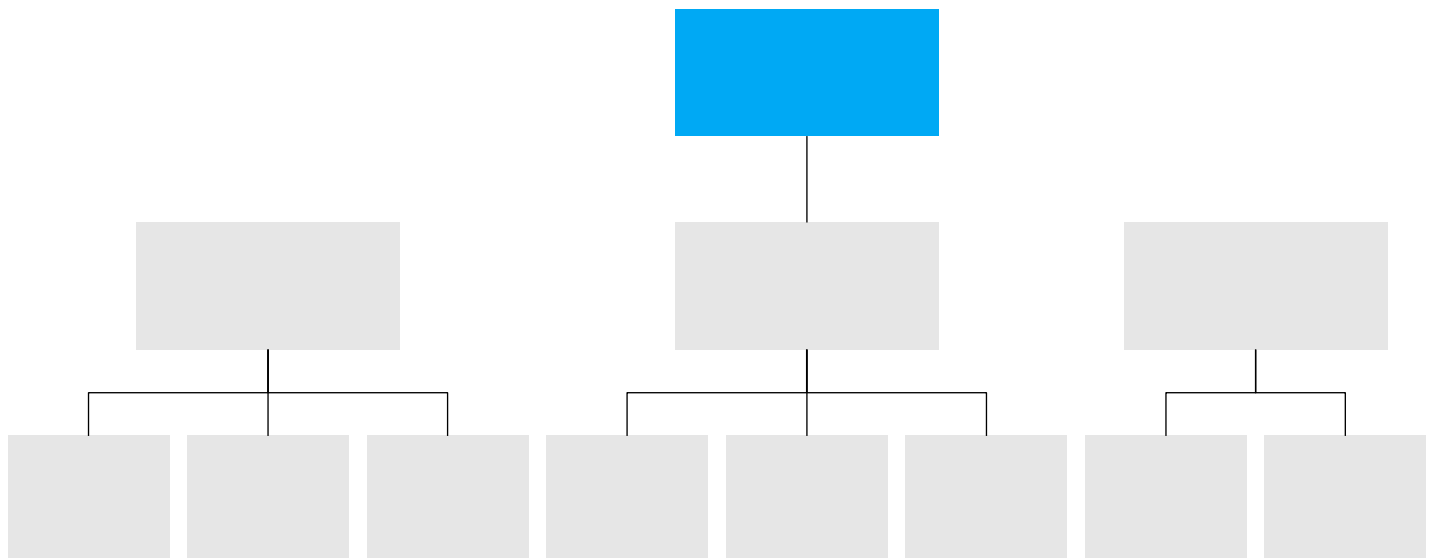
Contents

Digital Essentials Digital Course

What to Expect

The 2-3 hours **Digital Essentials** course is an engaging learning journey that de-mystifies "digital" and builds a foundational "digital toolkit" for learners to become more digitally literate and more effectively contribute to their organization's digital transformation.

Learning objectives

- Articulate what is "digital", why it matters, and how it creates value
- Build your digital "toolkit" through building foundational literacy
- Create positive mindset around digital.

Lessons

Lesson 1: Why is everyone so excited about digital?
Digital isn't just about new apps and websites

Lesson 2: How do organizations go digital?
Learn about the playbook that organizations use to successfully go digital

Lesson 3: Design Thinking
Put the user at the center of the design process for better products and services

Lesson 4: Agile
New team structures and working rhythms allow for quicker decisions

Lesson 5: Technology
Adopt digital tools to help you and your team achieve more

Lesson 6: Data
Unlock the power of data to improve decision making and generate insights

Lesson 7: My Digital Toolkit
Take what you've learned so far and build on it

Digital Essentials Digital Course

Try it yourself → *Analyze your data footprint*

Complete this section after taking the Data course

1   **Select an online platform that you frequently use and download all the data collected on you**

For Facebook:

- Click an arrow in the top right > Settings & Privacy > Settings > Your Facebook Information > Download Your Information > Click Create File to confirm the download request

For Apple:

- Log into your Apple ID > Data & Privacy > Manage your Data and Privacy > Get a copy of your data

For Google:

- Log into your Google Account > Data & personalization>Things you can create and do > Google Dashboard > Download your data

2   **Analyze your data and consider the following questions:**

- How many pages of text did you receive?
- What was the most surprising information?
- What was the most terrifying?
- Which information would be useful for your company to know and how could you leverage it?

Contents

Planner for Advanced Level Transition

To unlock the Advanced Level, make sure you complete all the actions below by the deadlines communicated to you via email.

☐ **A.** Complete all the lessons in Foundation level learning plan and the relevant feedback surveys

☐ **B.** Access the 360 skills assessment tool, complete the self-assessment and ensure you have feedback from 2 nominees (peers/managers/clients)

☐ **C.** Submit your Learning Reflections and Intentions Blog on the learning platform

☐ **D.** Prepare the verification documents needed to transition to the Advanced Level
- o Proof of graduation from post-secondary education
- o Proof of employment status

Tip: Make sure you have blue check marks next to all modules on our learning plan and that your progress bar is showing 100% completion
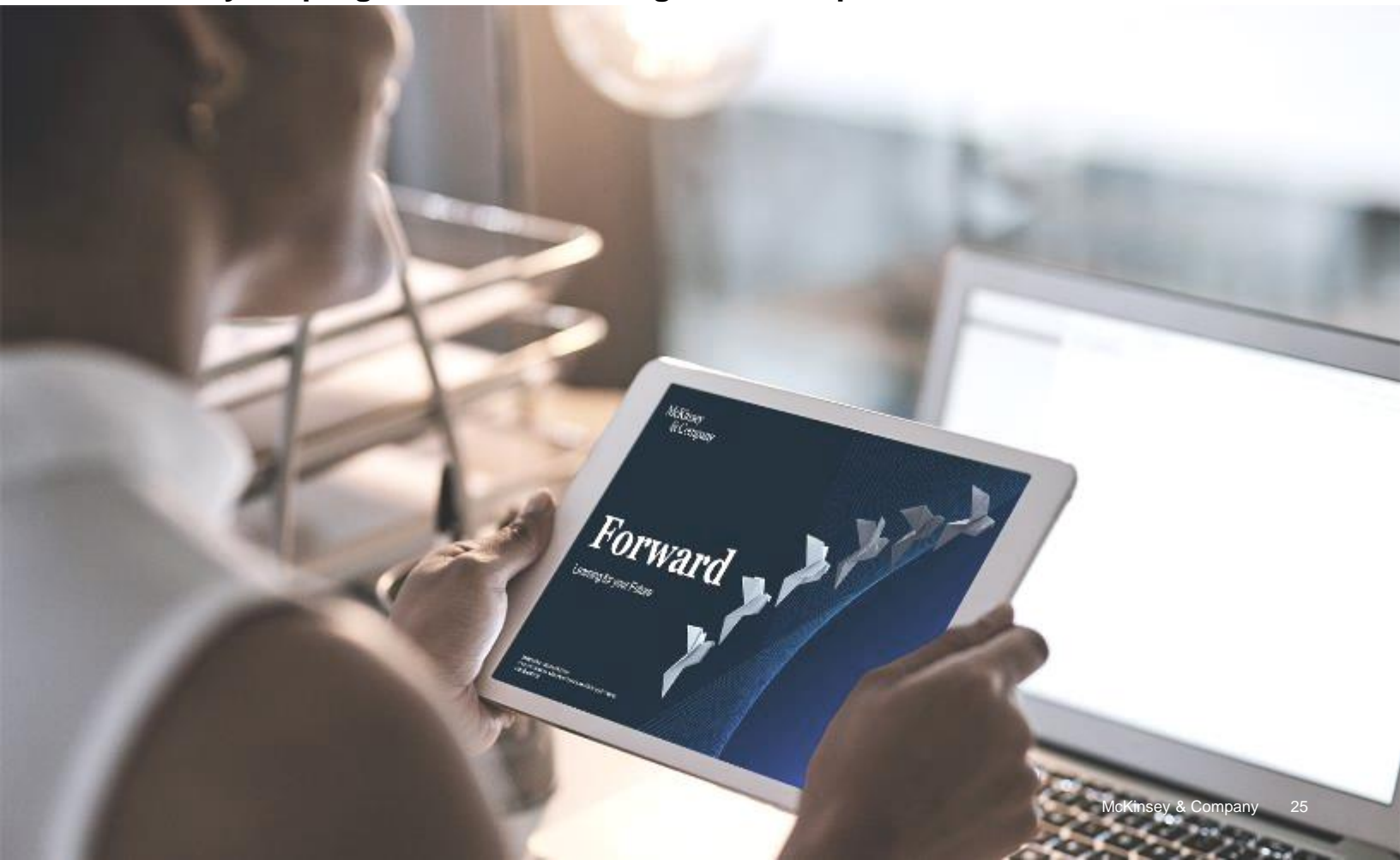
B: 360 skills assessment tool

Description

• Your **Forward 360 skills assessment** is an online tool that will allow you to **reflect on your future of work skills** and get **feedback from others who know you well.** This will further empower you to set meaningful learning intentions and goals going forward**.**

• Forward self-assessment is designed around 3 key leadership behaviors **Lead Yourself & Others, Conquer Business Challenges, and Navigate the Digital World**. It aims to provide a perspective on your current capabilities in these dimensions and create a baseline for the post program assessment to see your progress along the journey.

• **Completing this self-assessment and receiving feedback from 2 nominees before the end of the Foundation Level is one of the mandatory requirements** to qualify for the Advanced Level of the Forward program

• Should you transition to the Advanced Level of the Forward program, you will receive your **own personalized report** showing how you assessed your skills and the average rating of the persons you nominated

Process
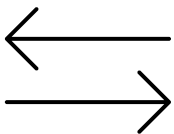
1 You will receive an email asking you to nominate 2 people who you work with on a frequent basis and who have a good understanding of your behaviors in a professional environment.

2 Nominate 2 people who could be a **peer or colleague at work, your manager or even a client**. Please reach out to them in advance to confirm they are willing to provide you with feedback and receive communication from the Forward program. We kindly request that you do not provide the names and email addresses of these individuals in advance of obtaining their confirmation.

3 Next, you will be asked to fill the self-assessment by answering 12 questions about your skills today.

4 The two people you nominated will receive an automated email with a link to an assessment for them to rate you on the same 12 future of work skills.

C. Learning Reflections and Intentions Blog

As part of the criteria to qualify for Advanced Level of the program, you will need to write a **brief blog post (~no more than 800 words)** sharing your most relevant learning from Level 1 of the program and your learning intention going forward.

Please note: You should submit your blog on the relevant section on your online learning plan. Your blog will be treated confidentially.

Introduction

Briefly introduce yourself, mentioning what motivated you to apply and enroll in the McKinsey Forward program?

Question 1:
What is a learning from the Forward Foundation Level that resonated with you, and which you have already started implementing at work? This could be a concept, a tool, or an idea that stuck with you and already impacted your mindset and behaviour.

For example, learning about "top-down" communication and structuring your e-mails/communications with a governing thought followed by supporting arguments.

Question 2:
Set a meaningful learning intention you'd like to focus on in the next month or two. Remember to frame your desired outcome as a learning intention versus a performance goal. Good learning intentions prioritize the experience itself, not just the outcome. Instead of focusing on a specific target, they focus on the process, discovering and exploring new ideas and personal growth.

D: Prepare your verification documents

Once the Forward team verifies you have completed all the courses, surveys and requirements by the deadline, we will email you asking you to submit the 2 required documents to confirm your eligibility. Please prepare these documents in good time and ensure the documents do not reveal any financial or other information considered personal.

Proof of graduation from post-secondary education – you can submit any one of the following:

• Graduation certificate from your degree or diploma program

• Transcript showing completion of all courses in the qualification

• Signed letter from the educational institution on letterhead paper confirming your completion of the degree/diploma program

Proof of current or previous employment – you can submit any one of the following:

• A confirmation letter from your employer on company letterhead confirming your employment (the letter should clearly state the role you are employed in)

• A letter of employment/appointment

• An extract of an official communication from your company to you

• A copy of your staff ID

• Proof that you have an active business email (this can be a screenshot of a mail from your business email or you can upload a mail you sent from your business email to your personal mail)

• If you are self-employed or freelancer, you may also submit
  o   A signed confirmatory letter from a recent client or investor
  o   A business or freelancer registration document showing your name
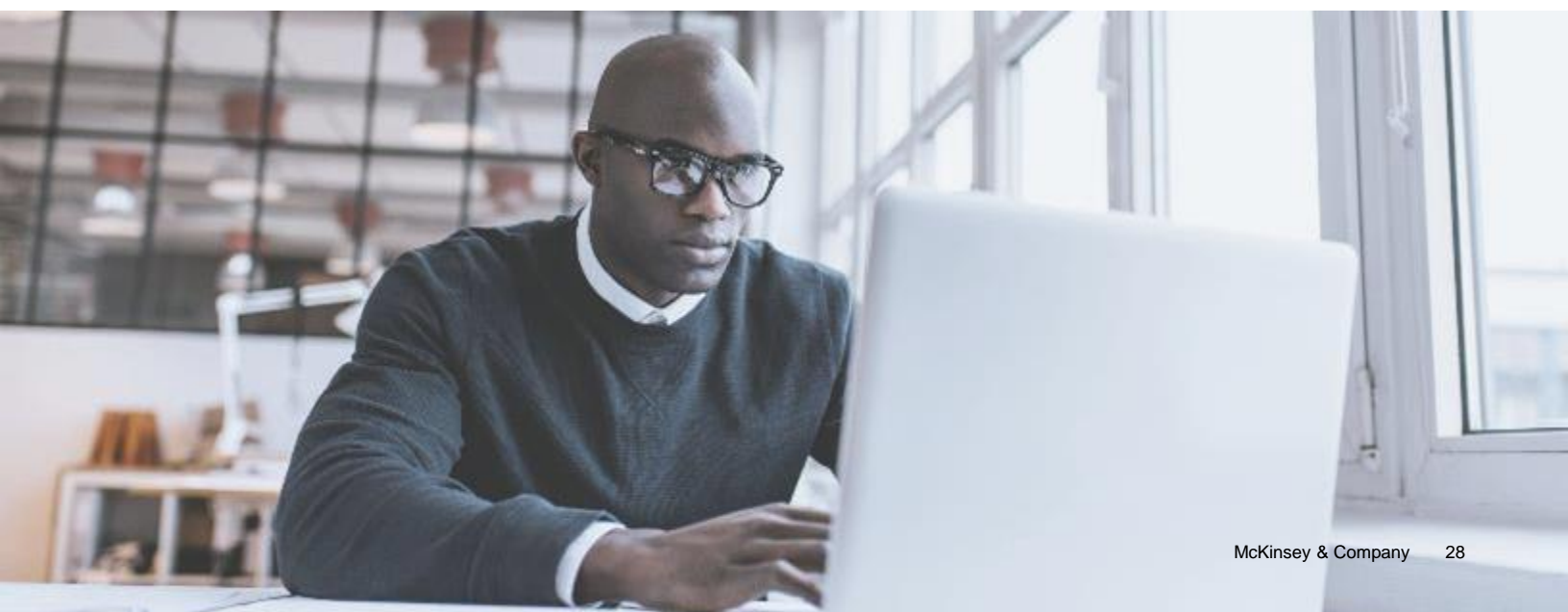
Hope to see you in the Forward Advanced Level!