

Developing PM Leaders



How to Identify and Develop PM leaders who:

- **Inspire all around them**
- **Create great customer and stakeholder relationships**
- **Engage confidently with strategic business issues**
- **Challenge your organisation to make it the best at delivering projects it can be.**

All the evidence from our research across multiple projects, PMs and markets demonstrates it is “how” PM leaders engage with **individuals**, **teams** and **organisations** that is the real differentiator of success.

Can these PM Leadership skills be taught?

The short answer is no: traditional PM competency training provides the building blocks of PM by teaching “what” needs to be done. It misses the subtlety of the “how”. Since it is the “how” that differentiates the best leaders, training the traditional skills on their own simply cannot develop the required leadership skills.

How can PM Leadership skills be learnt?

Those few talented individuals with the potential to become leaders must first be identified. Then the relational, behavioural and E.I. skills so pertinent to leadership must be developed in ways that enable the new PM leaders to demonstrably change “how” they operate.

It is the “how” qualities like trust, respect, commitment and passion that are the keys to great leadership capability. Unlike the “what” skills, these leadership competencies are more art than science and are undertaken in individual ways by every leader. The PMs who operate as leaders are the most successful precisely because they inspire people to “put their hearts” into their work: who create teams that are magically “more than the sum of their parts”. They can inspire these heartfelt qualities in others because they have been challenged, usually by other great leaders through their careers, to discover these “how” qualities in themselves. Suddenly it becomes obvious why it is impossible to teach leadership prescriptively: why leadership must be encouraged to emerge, in individual ways from those with talent.

Why now?

In difficult times it is the people with real leadership skills who can create success: as success becomes harder to achieve so the demand for more such capable leaders inevitably grows. The current market provides an opportunity to rethink the investment strategy and utilise available budgets in more targeted ways.

Discovering answers to your questions

The likelihood is if you are still reading this you have already accepted the need to develop PM leadership capability and are probably grappling with at least the following questions:

1. Why are some of our PM leaders so much more successful than others?

This depends on discovering what enables a leader in your organisation to be successful. As an example, an organisation whose focus is on gaining market share may most value PMs who can lead successful bids and increase bid – win ratios. Context is vital in determining what makes some of your PMs more successful than others. Checking this with your future plans enables development priorities that will maximise your ROI to be developed.

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We undertake this analysis by utilising our “**Best from Rest**” process which involves PM stakeholders in identifying and discovering what makes “best” within the organisation. The selected “best” are observed, interviewed and undertake 360 reviews and all significant differences between them and the “rest” are identified. An analysis of the findings is then undertaken utilising our **PM Competency Framework** which compares PM leadership competencies across PM communities. The resulting reports identify for individuals their opportunities to develop leadership capability, the contextualised requirements for the organisation and highlights such cross organisational issues as culture, recommended areas for process improvements, performance targeting etc.

2. How can we identify our talent?

A recurring question is how to assess not for performance but for potential. Because of the importance of getting this right we have deliberately selected one of the foremost global business psychologist organisations, **YSC**, to work with us to deliver our two day “**PM Leadership Discovery Workshop**”. Guidance is given on how to select the talented individuals who are most likely to benefit from attendance at this workshop. Then utilising PM case studies and highly participative learning all attendees will receive individual feedback on their leadership potential as well as a personalised learning route map to increase their effectiveness. Those who are identified as having the most talent and potential will be identified to undertake the advanced learning that will take them up the leadership capability curve in the shortest possible time.

Deciding to invest in developing your PM Leadership

Either through your own efforts or as a result of undertaking our “**Best from Rest**” and/or our “**PM Leadership Discovery Workshop**” you are then in the position to:

1. set clear goals about what you want from such a programme
2. select those with the talent to participate
3. obtain senior level buy-in
4. select the development programme that will fulfil your requirements.

PM Leadership Development Programme

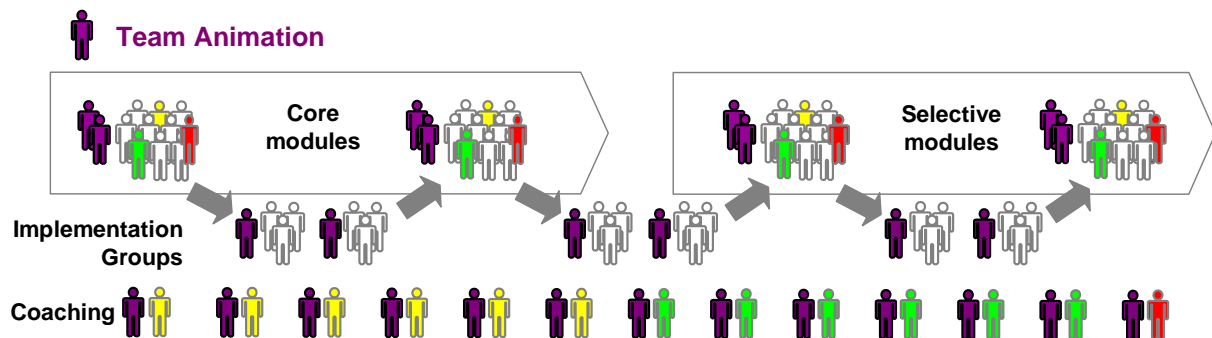
Our programmes are based on tested leadership development principles. Every programme will be different precisely because every organisation will have specific needs. In each will be the opportunity to involve **YSC** to undertake ongoing assessment and to work with some of the best in the industry to provide a flexible, innovative and successful programme delivering enhanced PM leadership capability.

Programmes are at their most effective with eight plus participants who “buy-in” to both the opportunity and the commitment, supported by the organisations’ business leaders. Programmes consist of:

- **Group Learning** through two core modules and typically two selective modules (outlined below). Group learning is in experiential workshops that encourage reflection enabling individuals to shift “how” they operate and to “get the feel” for best practice PM leadership topics such as optimising team performance and change management. The behavioural learning is both challenging and supportive. Topics like E.I are learnt as an integral component for PM topics like stakeholder management.
- **Implementation Groups** of about four people to encourage implementation, “working with” issues like resistance and risk. Facilitated by an experienced team coach these groups meet at least twice between workshops to:
 - challenge and support participants to implement what they have learnt and to encourage them to model a mentoring approach; flowing the learning into their teams
 - create a peer group that is a power house of new PM initiatives for the organisation and supports Community of Practice initiatives such as cascading of knowledge to the community
- **Coaching** for a period of approximately six months at the point when participants are making a significant transition to a new leadership role.

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Programmes last at least 18 months: shorter timeframes are unlikely to provide any lasting results. Encouraging the active support of senior key stakeholders e.g. assignment owners for planning the most appropriate learning positions for these participants is important for the success of the programme.



Core modules

1. Understanding self and business context

Typically includes:

- E.I. with a focus on personal awareness and self control
- Risk Management
- Vision and strategy
- Customer Management utilising **Insight Consultancy** expertise
- Business understanding and alignment.

2. Influencing others – team, client and stakeholders

Typically includes:

- E.I. with a focus on awareness of others and relationship skills
- Team performance
- Coaching approach
- Stakeholder management.

Programme Leaders



Donnie MacNicol

Utilising his extensive PM experience in construction and consultancy Donnie leads consultancy, training, facilitation and mentoring assignments. Widely recognised as contributing to the “people side of project management” thinking he is in much demand as a speaker and writer on PM leadership.



Brenda Hales

Brenda is an experienced coach, team coach, a qualified coaching supervisor, consultant and facilitative trainer. With an MSc in Psychotherapy and extensive project experience in the IT industry where she led a large PM CoP, Brenda combines a wide range of theoretical and practical experience.

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Selective Modules

Programmes typically consist of two of these selective modules, selected to best meet your organisation's context and requirements. We have gathered together some of the best in our industry to work with us to provide proven modules to develop the most appropriate PM leadership development for each organisation. Unhindered by the need to use internal resources we select, integrate and ensure the quality of all of the modules creating a real "best of breed" programme designed to meet each organisations needs. We work closely with the likes of **Geoff Reiss**, widely regarded as a world expert on Programme Management, who will deliver certain modules and supports the development of any more specialised requirements.



Business and Market Vision, Strategy and Planning

Utilising a network of highly experienced Senior Leaders this is the opportunity to raise PM thinking to the board level.



Commercial, Contractual and Procurement

Learning how to negotiate and develop innovative approaches to these topics in ways that enhance relationships and PM success.



Building an Inspired and Sustainable Organisation

Warrior School is a unique experience run in Africa with the Maasai tribesmen for PMs who are expected to influence their organisation with fresh and creative business perspectives. This also provides the opportunity for personal inspiration, thinking and reflection.



Understanding change management

Introducing a powerful, proven change management framework and methodology this module enables PM leaders to lead organisations to identify, address and overcome resistance.



Leveraging Business Value from Methodologies and Processes

Utilising their recognised wealth of experience in methodologies, this module will encourage both a people buy-in and "helicopter" approach in order to realise the organisational and business benefits to be derived from the often substantial investment in this area.

Professional associations

Associates of:



National School of Government

Corporate members of:



Actively involved in professional and academic organisations:

APM, PMI, ICE, RICS, Oxford Brookes University and other bodies with a growing list of published articles and presentations.

Donnie is also pleased to chair the **Association for Project Management (APM)** People Specific Interest Group and contribute as a member of the APM Policy Unit.

Our clients

We work with a range of organisations in both the public and private sector. Current / recent clients include BP, BT, Composite, CSA, EMCOR, EPSRC, Ministry of Justice, Network Rail and Watson Wyatt.