



THE LEADING EDGE

2008 PROGRAM OUTLINE

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THE LEADING EDGE PROGRAM

The Leading Edge is a multifaceted leadership development program for people between operational and executive levels - team leaders, supervisors, unit managers and middle managers - in public, private and non-profit sectors.

The Leading Edge involves a combination of experiential and conceptual activities for enhancing leadership skills. It offers participants time to reflect on workplace achievements and challenges, to discover new perspectives on leadership, to consider skill development needs, to develop networks and learn from peers, to improve relationship skills and to gain confidence in their ability to lead teams in times of change.

The program normally takes 12 months and comprises three units. **Becoming a Leader** (Semester 1) introduces leadership and focuses on certain important skills. **Leading Edge Concepts** (Semester 2) explores the concept of leadership and related theories, including issues of ethics, governance and the psychology of leadership. These two units are delivered in three 2-day workshops, with an evening meeting before each to aid continuity and feedback. **Taking the Lead** involves a workplace project developed and implemented in parallel with the first two units*. It is facilitated by a staff member, a workplace adviser where available and, if participants wish, by peers.

The Leading Edge employs a variety of learning modes. The workshops are facilitated by a team of academic staff and industry trainers, and discussions with guest executives are often a highlight. Workshops focus on experiential learning, whereby participants' work-place experiences are integrated with ideas gained from facilitators, executives or readings. Outside workshops learning is supported by independent study, peer discussions, on-the-job reflection and discussion with colleagues or supervisors. Site visits to other workplaces offer exposure to new ways of working.

After graduation, participants are invited to continue development through events where they will share insights, discuss leadership issues, meet industry leaders and extend their professional networks.

The program is delivered through the facilities of the Joondalup Learning Precinct partners, giving us access to top quality workshop facilities, outdoor activity locations, restaurants, library facilities and overnight accommodation if required. Ready parking access is provided, or the JLP can be easily reached by train and shuttle or a short walk.

* It is also possible to start the project in the second semester or conduct it entirely in a third semester.

LEADING EDGE OBJECTIVES

The Leading Edge's primary aim is to prepare participants for middle-level leadership in their organizations.

Participants will develop

- **understanding** of their leadership strengths, challenges and development needs
- **confidence** as a change agent capable of furthering their organization's mission, vision and values
- **higher-level skills** for guiding learning about leadership
- **skills for leading** employees: communication, motivation, influencing
- **relationship skills** and networks, both inside and outside the organisation
- **conceptual understanding** of leadership, management and the psychology of human behaviour in work.

The program also has a strong emphasis on outcomes for participants' organizations, with many opportunities for incorporation of issues and projects.

Participant's organizations will benefit from

- visibly improved professionalism and collaboration, resulting in better **service delivery**
- staff with **leadership potential rewarded**, supported and developed as change agents
- **reports** on participants' leadership potential to assist organizational staff development and succession planning (on request).
- formal use of **line managers' expertise** in guiding participants' development.
- a substantial **workplace project** (perhaps a team effort) that may have a strong organisational development focus
- **fresh ideas** - experiences of other organisations, including benchmarking
- staff who are skilled at **coaching and mentoring others**.
- contribution to **dialog on leadership and management**, including skills development.

LEARNING METHODS

Learning from Experience

The program differs from many academic courses in its emphasis on **learning from lived experience**. Our first goal is to facilitate development of skills for learning from your own experience, for example skills of self-direction, self-support, reflection, observation, imagination and experimentation.

We also encourage participants to learn from the **experience of others**: peers, teaching staff, workplace advisors/mentors and our guest leaders. Program facilitators will take a strong **coaching** approach in providing individualised feedback and supports such as connection to resources. Optional coaching sessions with academic staff or industry coaches are also available (additional fees apply).

Learning from experience also involves **sites visits** to workplaces different from your own, and an **intensive leadership project** meeting organisational or other stakeholders' needs.

Learning through Inquiry

While there is no substitute for experience, leaders also need good **conceptual skills** and these are best developed through exposure to academic ways of understanding. The Leading Edge offers a grounding in theories of leadership and management, as well as theories from disciplines such as psychology, ethics and adult learning that underpin informed leadership practice.

Our focus here is not on copying others' ideas - even those of top academic thinkers or highly paid management gurus – so much as **surfacing implicit assumptions** about how leadership works, **refining them in relation to the ideas of others**, **contextualising** them to your own strengths, interests and organisational needs, and focusing them on practical outcomes such as improved service delivery.

Recognising that many participants will not have recent tertiary study experience, we offer support for development of intellectual skills such as critical thinking, researching, writing & oral presentation, problem solving and creativity. These skills are not only useful for further University study, but can significantly improve outcomes in many aspects of leadership.

ASSESSMENT

Leading Edge assessment activities consolidate learning and provide feedback (and grades for university accreditation). They emphasise reflection on skills-based learning and/or application of concepts to organisational problems. Assessments for each unit are described below. Unit coordinators offer flexibility with deadlines for assignments, although university requirements for processing of grades provide limits to this. In many cases, assignments can be delivered by email.

UNIVERSITY ACCREDITATION

A pass in each unit of the Leading Edge provides credit for a postgraduate unit at ECU:

Becoming a Leader - MAN4121/ MAN5121 Leadership
Leading Edge Concepts - MAN4122/ MAN5122 Leadership Skills
Taking the Lead - MAN4125/ MAN5125 Workplace Practicum

ECU units can be used towards a 4 unit Graduate Certificate of Business (Leadership) or Graduate Certificate of Business (Management), the 8 unit Graduate Diploma of Management, or the 12 unit MBA. Other ECU postgraduate courses may accept these units as electives.

Enrolment in a Graduate Certificate requires an undergraduate degree or a minimum of five years professional experience, plus standard University English proficiency.

Enrolment in the GD or MBA requires an undergraduate degree and may involve additional requirements – please contact either the Leading Edge administration officer, Nicole Jarvis, or Sandra Brennan of the Faculty of Business Higher Degrees Office for further details.

The fourth unit in a Graduate Certificate can be taken from a wide range of units offered in ECU's postgraduate program, in the Faculty of Business and elsewhere, subject to approval by the Head of the School of Management. Such units may be available in ECU's standard 13-week semester mode on Churchlands or Joondalup campus, or in external or on-line mode, or in selected cases in intensive Saturday mode. If there is sufficient interest, a 4th unit will be run in 2009 for the Leading Edge group in a workshop format.

The fourth unit may also be exempted for applicants meeting Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) standards. Applicants for RPL are required to submit a portfolio demonstrating learning from alternative sources (eg industry training) and achievement of management or leadership proficiency to a level comparable to an introductory university unit. They are also required to pass a Challenge Exam, demonstrating basic familiarity with management or leadership concepts and relevant study skills. This option can be explored in the Leading Edge selection interview.

RECOMMENDED ENROLMENT PATTERN

The program can be completed in 12 months. Participants will be expected to attend six Friday/Saturday workshops, six evening meetings and two orientation meetings.

Alternative patterns may be available for participants unable to meet these requirements, for example by supplementing workshop learning through external study or ECU's regular internal study program. Participants are, however, strongly encouraged to take the Leading Edge in the recommended pattern, especially for the first two units, to maximise peer learning and support.

UNIT 1 BECOMING A LEADER

Objectives

In Becoming a Leader you will

- examine the nature of leadership, how it relates to management, and the new roles of leaders
- explore the nature of public discussions of leadership
- develop skills of active and retroactive reflection
- conduct an audit of your leadership capabilities and potentials
- create a plan for development of your leadership potential
- refine skills of self-direction
- appreciate the critical role of emotions in leadership

- develop specific skills such as coaching, communicating, leading teams, building trust, influencing, working with values, managing change and developing community relationships.

Workshops and Meetings

- Orientation evening (Wed 6–9pm): introduces the unit and prepares for the 1st workshop.
- Three weekend workshops (Fri 9am – Sat 3pm).
- Three class meetings (Wed 6–9pm): to share course information, discuss experiences with workplace learning and self-study.

Self-Learning

- Workshops require some prior reading and reflection on your work or career.
- Reflective exercises continue development of skills and concepts after workshops.

Learning from Others

- A peer mentoring process will begin in the first workshop.
- Participants introduce issues from their workplace.
- Learning from guest executives, work colleagues and managers.

Assessment

- Assignment 1 Learning Journal – integrates workshop learning with workplace and life experience (40%)
- Assignment 2 Reflective Self Audit – develops awareness of your leadership capabilities and potentials (30%)
- Assignment 3 Self Development Plan – a plan for your future, in this program and beyond (30%)

UNIT 2 LEADING EDGE CONCEPTS

Objectives

In Leading Edge Concepts you will

- explore different approaches to leadership from the academic literature
- compare different leadership styles and their relationship to organisational contexts
- examine the role of ethics in leadership
- identify the role of leadership in governance
- create frameworks for understanding the psychology of leaders and followers

Workshops and Meetings

- Orientation evening (Wed 6–9pm): introduces the unit and prepares for the 1st workshop.
- Three weekend workshops (Fri 9am – Sat 3pm).
- Three class meetings (Wed 6-9pm): to share course information, experiences with workplace learning and self-study.

Self-Learning

- Workshops require prior reading and reflection on your work or career.
- Reflective exercises to continue development of skills and concepts from workshops.

Learning from Others

- Peer mentoring, especially to continue development of the skills introduced in Becoming a Leader.
- Participant-led panel discussions with guest executives.
- Workshops include comparison of cultures and issues in participants' organization.

Assessment

Assignment 1 Leadership Case Analysis – Investigates cases of success or failure in leadership from the media or personal research, applying theories of this unit (50%)

Assignment 2 Leader Analysis – Analyses personal qualities of exemplary leaders (50%)

OR Future of Leadership – What will be the future role of leaders in your Industry/Organisation and what capabilities will they require? (50%)

UNIT 3 TAKING THE LEAD

Objectives

This unit is an opportunity to refine concepts and skills from the other units in a project with a substantial leadership requirement, in your organisation or as a consultant for another. It should involve a visible outcome for the organisation (eg a workplace or community presentation, a report to management, improved sales performance against a target), and clear goals for the leadership skills you wish to develop.

Meetings

The project is supervised primarily through individual meetings (by appointment), supplemented by email. Project requirements will be discussed in Workshops.

Self-Learning

- Readings on consulting, action research and reflection.
- Materials from the other units and further independent research to provide the conceptual background.
- A learning diary is suggested.

Learning from Others

- The project can be a group activity, subject to approval by the coordinator.

- We endeavour to facilitate peer support for projects not done in groups.
- Collaboration with workplace and/or external stakeholders is expected.
- A presentation or forum on outcomes to colleagues and/or organisational or community stakeholders where appropriate.

Assessment

Assignment 1 Proposal – A professionally planned, researched and presented proposal (20%)

Assignment 2 Presentation & Report – Evaluates the project and identifies your learning about leadership (80%)

COURSE MATERIALS

The cost of all materials excluding texts is included in the fee. Readings, guides and texts will be provided on the orientation night.

LIBRARY ACCESS

Participants have access to ECU's libraries and related services, including electronic databases and inter-library loan services. Many library services can be accessed remotely. Details are provided upon enrolment.

CAMPUS SERVICES

Parking will be provided in an area specifically set aside for Leading Edge participants. All student facilities of ECU are available.

TRANSPORT

The Joondalup Learning Precinct is located 2 minutes from the Hodges Drive freeway exit. Trains from Perth station take 15-25 minutes, and are usually met by a shuttle bus to the JLP on weekdays. Joondalup station is five minutes walk from the JLP.

MEALS

Morning and afternoon teas, lunches and one dinner are provided in each workshop. A variety of food outlets in ECU, West Coast College, the Police Academy and Joondalup city are available outside workshops.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is available at the Police Academy (\$65 pn) and at resort venues in the Northern Suburbs (variable costs). Please book through Nicole as soon as possible.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Wendy Baker, 6304 5419, w.baker@ecu.edu.au for administrative enquiries or Peter Standen, 6304 5283, p.standen@ecu.edu.au for academic inquiries.