

Is Managing for Me?

Course Description:

This self-guided program is designed to assist you in considering a career in management and leadership. Like all career decisions, many factors are at play. Some of the factors to consider include your own interests, motivation and life circumstances. It's also important to have a clear picture of the roles and responsibilities as well as a more specific understanding of what it's like to manage others at RIT.

Audience:

Employees interested in exploring a management/leadership career at RIT

Overview:

This program is designed to support self-discovery. Whether you make a decision now or in the future, these five lessons are an opportunity to learn about leading others as you learn more about yourself in the process.

Lesson One: Manager Roles and Responsibilities

Lesson Two: The Modern Leader

Lesson Three: Personal Career Exploration

Lesson Four: Perspectives - Leading at RIT

Lesson Five: Reflections & Summary

Format:

The lessons may be conveniently taken at your own pace. A variety of resources such as online courses, articles and exercises provide content, while each lesson's "key questions" prompt thoughtful reflection. To get started, briefly review the five lessons to decide how you'll tackle each lesson. Schedule it on your calendar. As you do, consider how much time you want to spend on each lesson - some may take as little as an hour while others may require additional time.

Talent Roadmap:

To add this course to your Talent Roadmap transcript, go to [Talent Roadmap | Talent Development | RIT](#) and click the job aid for Adding External Learning.

Getting Started

Instructions:

- Read the **Introduction**.
- Begin with Lesson One and work your way through Lesson Five.
- Use the resources provided to meet the objectives for each lesson.
- When you're finished with each lesson, complete the **Key Questions**.

Introduction:

A 2014 Gallup poll of more than one million employed US workers revealed that the number one reason people leave a job is because of a bad or ineffective manager. This continues to be true today. Why is this? Often time's managers come from being high performing individual contributors -- skilled in their work, but equally often do not have the skills or experience needed to deal effectively or productively with managing a group of people. Perhaps they ended up in a manager role unintentionally and didn't reverse course or were unable to figure out how to be effective along the way.

While many leaders report high job satisfaction, there's no doubt the demands are high and the work environment continues to evolve. This means the skills needed to be effective are also evolving. And while training is usually available to support new managers, the fact is leadership learning occurs in the field, on the job and in the trenches. If you're someone who likes to continuously learn, take responsibility, solve problems, tackle challenges, manage changes and gets satisfaction in helping others reach their goals then leadership just might be the place for you!

Lesson One: Manager Roles & Responsibilities

One of the more important tasks you'll undertake in determining your career path is the decision to remain an individual contributor or to manage others. In this lesson, you will learn about the general roles and responsibilities associated with managing a group of people and being responsible for a work unit – which as you'll see is very different from a technical or individual contributor role.

Learning Objectives	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State the primary roles and responsibilities of a manager.• Identify challenging aspects of the role that warrant consideration.• Reflect on your current situation to inform your willingness to make a significant career change.	<p>The Roles & Responsibilities of a Manager</p> <p>Do You Really Want to be Manager One Day?</p> <p>Transitioning from Technical Professional to Manager</p>

Key Questions

What are the most/least attractive responsibilities of a manager?

What about being a manager both excites and concerns you? Why?

What might you miss about your current role? How willing are you to give up portions of it or potentially all of it?

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Lesson Two: The Modern Leader

Becoming a leader involves constant learning. In fact, it's been said that leadership and learning are indispensable. This statement is truer today than ever before. Consider the environment we live and work in – it's been described as "VUCA" short for volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. Understanding the current environment as well as the types of skills and capabilities that are needed for success are critical. In this lesson you will have the opportunity to learn about today's fast-paced and ever changing environment, understand what employees want at work and read-up on what experts say are the skills of the future. By the way, the future is already here.

Learning Objectives	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the current environment that leaders navigate.• Learn about the expectations employees and staff have at work.• Consider the skills that help leaders be effective in today's work environment.	<p>Leading in a VUCA World</p> <p>"12 Things Employees Want at Work"</p> <p>10 Leadership Skills Every Manager Needs to Succeed</p>

Key Questions

How might leading in a VUCA environment be different from leading in a more stable and predictable environment? Does this excite you or concern you? What might this mean for you as you consider a manager role?

Do any of the "12 Things" surprise you? Which ones? Why? Which might be the most challenging for you to fulfill? Why?

When you consider the "10 Skills" which ones did you pay particular attention to? Why? What might this tell you?

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Lesson Three: Personal Career Exploration

Career decisions are personal. Many factors are considered when thinking about career choices including interests, motivations, skills, and personal life circumstances, just to name a few. In this lesson, you'll have an opportunity to explore different facets that make you, you -- and that may have an impact on your career decisions. If you haven't taken stock of yourself in the past, don't put it off. Knowing yourself significantly improves your ability to make good choices for yourself – not just at work, but in your life. If one day you find yourself in a leadership role coaching an employee on their development and career options, you'll be able to share one of the most important things they can do for themselves: "Know thyself." (*Socrates*)

Learning Objectives	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify values, strengths, improvement opportunities, interests and skills to inform your career direction.• Identify the types of behaviors and activities that indicate a natural interest in leading.• Reflect on reasons for wanting to become a manager/leader.	<p>Discovering your Strengths</p> <p>15 Signs Your Employee Is Ready to Become a Manager</p> <p>The Best (and Worst) Reasons to Be a Leader</p>

Key Questions

What are your three most important values? What are two of your strengths and two areas for improvement?

What are your interests? What do you enjoy doing? What don't you like to do?

Which of the "15 Signs" sound like you?

Be honest with yourself, why do you want to be a leader?

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Lesson Four: Perspectives - Leading at RIT

So what's it really like? Here are three of the best ways to answer this question: 1) ask people doing it; 2) observe people doing it and 3) find ways to try it out for yourself. In this lesson, you will take your exploration out to the field (literally) to get relevant data (not unlike what a manager does). You will prepare to conduct exploratory interviews with RIT leaders of your choosing. Next you'll spend time observing leaders at RIT. What do they do? Where do they spend their time? Who do they spend time with? Finally, you will identify activities or behaviors that you can "try on" from the "15 Signs" article. (Option: request the opportunity to lead a small project or volunteer to lead a low-profile activity). Completing these exercises indicate your willingness to take a risk, and "put yourself out there". For those who do, it may just be the "16th Sign" that leadership is right for you.

Tips: Don't limit yourself to one interview or observation; take notes during observations and ask for feedback while trying out leader-like activities.

Learning Objectives	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct exploratory interviews with at least two RIT managers. • Observe RIT managers and leaders at work - what they do, how they do it and how others react/respond. • Try at least two activities or behaviors found in the article. 	<p>How to Ask for an Exploratory Interview</p> <p>Exploratory Interview Questions (below)</p> <p>15 Signs Your Employee Is Ready to Become a Manager</p>

Exploratory Interview Questions

1. What are your job responsibilities? What does a "typical" day look like?
2. What percent of your job is producing work and what percent is managing the work of others or your team/group?
3. Who else besides your direct reports do you interact with that you didn't previously? In what way(s)?
4. What were the biggest hurdles you faced in the first 6 months of managing? How did you handle them?
5. When you first became a manager, were you surprised by anything? If so what?
6. What do you enjoy or find satisfying about managing a group of people?
7. What situations have been the most challenging? Can you provide at least two examples and explain why they were challenging?
8. When wearing your manager hat – what skills do you lean on most? Which skills do you think are the most important?
9. What's different today about managing that wasn't true when you started your career?
10. What development opportunities do you recommend for those interested in leadership?
11. If you could go back and do anything differently, what would it be and why?
12. What have you learned about people?
13. What have you learned about yourself?
14. What is one thing you recommend that I do as I explore management as a career?
15. Is there anyone else you recommend that I speak with?

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Key Questions

Did you complete the learning objectives? If not, why not?

What did you learn about managing and leading through the exploratory interviews and field experiences?

Lesson Five: Reflections & Summary

Career decisions are part art and part science. At the end of your exploration, if you're still uncertain about your direction, it's not a show-stopper, however it's important to take time and reflect on why this might be. Allow yourself time to reflect on the entire experience and continue to talk to others who's opinion you trust.

Learning Objectives	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflect on what you learned and write it down.• Share your reflections and experiences with a trusted colleague, manager, significant other or friend.• Identify next steps (if any, at this time) in your career exploration.	Key Questions Reflections & Summary (below)

Key Questions - Reflections & Summary

Write about your discoveries. What did you learn about managing? Leading? Yourself? What surprised you most about what you observed, heard, did, or learned during this process? What (if anything) has changed about your career direction?

What's still unknown to you that you'd like to explore more? How will you do this?

Who will you share your discoveries and experience with?

What are your next steps?