

Program Guide: Invested in the Future

The Program is a two-year learning and development program. The program has been designed to support you in developing core competencies. Competencies are built on fundamental leadership skills and practices. The six core competencies are made up of 12 skills and practices. By developing the fundamental skills and practices of effective leadership, you will be essentially developing your core competencies. Your targeted competencies will be determined using Praditus 360 and discussion with your direct manager.

You will be guided and supported throughout the program in developing your own learning plan. Your learning plan will cover the courses you take, learning support methods, action learning projects, and a rubric-based assessment. You will have 18 months to complete the five Cornell courses and 24 months to complete five action learning projects using a learning support method.

The value assessment tool will help you ground your projects in values that are internally motivated. This tool will help you determine your courses, learning support methods, and action learning projects. Action learning based on your self-assessed value(s) enhances the meaningfulness of learning. You may choose to focus on one value for all five learning cycles or choose a different value for each. The choice of value is not as critical as the understanding that your learning cycle is grounded on a value that is relevant to you. The tool can be found in the toolkit.

Values include:

1. Achievement.
2. Independence.
3. Recognition.
4. Relationships.
5. Support.
6. Working conditions.

Core Competencies

Communication
Leadership
Strategic thinking
Business and financial acumen
Innovative and entrepreneurial mindset
Leading through change

Leadership Skills and Practices

Decision making
Resilience
Prioritizing
Goal setting
Respect
Trust
Motivation
Recognition
Analytical skills
Communication
Financial acumen
Agility
Engagement

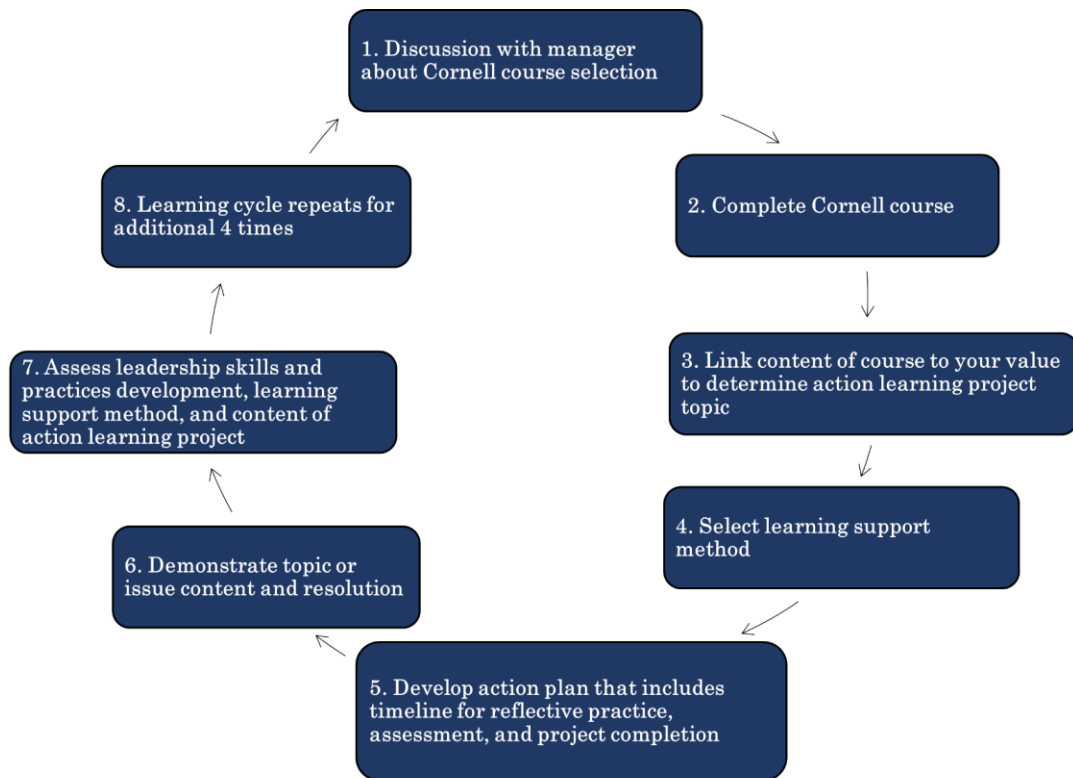
Learning Cycle

You will need to complete five learning cycles over the course of the program. A learning cycle combines formal education through Cornell University, use of a learning support method, an action learning project, and demonstration and assessment. The five action learning cycles support the development of core competencies.

After each learning cycle you will assess your experience. You will then move on to another learning cycle. This sequence will provide you with a variety of ways to use critical reflection to internalize your learning experience. Critical reflection is a process of identifying, questioning, and assessing your knowledge. It is a key component in completing the assessment rubrics. This process will help you achieve growth in all areas of skills and practices that comprise core competencies.

Instructions

1. Discuss with your direct manager which Cornell course you will enroll in. A list of available courses is included in the toolkit.
2. During the course, consider how its content relates to your value.
3. Determine an action learning project topic that links your course content and your value. The topic should focus on what you feel is relevant.
4. Consider which method of learning support will assist and support the development of your action learning project.
5. Develop and complete an action plan that includes a timeline for reflective practice, assessment, and project completion.
6. Demonstrate your action learning project topic including the issue or problem and its potential resolution.
7. Complete the rubric assessments on *skills and practices* and *content of the action learning project*.
8. Repeat the learning cycle 4 more times.



Example learning cycle:

1. You and your direct manager meet and discuss the results of your self-assessment. You also discuss which skills and practices that you will be strengthening this cycle and in which Cornell course you will enroll.
2. You enroll in the course *Leading with Credibility*.
3. You determine that your action learning topic is on demonstrating credibility when supporting staff. This links your Cornell course content to your value of Support. Your action learning project is the development of a checklist on how leadership can demonstrate credibility when supporting staff.
4. You choose the learning support method of *mentorship* to develop a network to support the development of your action learning project. You discuss with your manager about a potential mentorship partner and send an invitation and the Guide.
5. You and your partner complete the learning contract. Both of you develop an action plan that includes milestones and timelines. You will need to meet no less than five times to complete the assessment rubric for *action project content*.
 - a. You develop a list of questions to use when interviewing various staff for their thoughts and opinions on how leadership can demonstrate credibility when supporting staff.

- b. Your partner provides support, guidance, and feedback on its development.
 - c. You and your partner develop a list of potential staff to be interviewed and send invitations and the list of interview questions.
 - d. You conduct the interviews and develop an aggregate summary from which you create a checklist.
 - e. You and your partner review the aggregate summary checklist.
6. You select the style of delivery and demonstrate your learning project content to the audience of your determination. You develop an educational aid of your choice and decide to make it available through the Academy.
7. You and your direct manager complete the *skills and practices* assessment rubric. You, your direct manager, and your partner complete the assessment rubric for *project content*.

Action Learning Projects

Learning cycles that include action learning projects provide you with opportunities to illustrate the knowledge you have gained through formal education. Action learning projects strengthen skills and practices by applying new knowledge from Cornell course content in a practical application. It should be based on your self-identified value and a topic that is relevant to you and the organization. With consistent support from and dialogue with your manager, you pursue your own development and improve your identified skills or practice.

Projects developed through action learning are not meant to be time exhaustive. Your project should be manageable in scope and time.

Over the course of your two-year program, your learning cycles will help you to:

- Develop skills and practices through hands-on application.
- Build interactive relationships between areas of the organization's functions and departments and grow your network.
- Gain a deeper understanding and respect for the work of other departments and eliminate misconceptions.
- Experience a positive hands-on learning experience that is internally motivated by your value.
- Utilize the knowledge you have gained through formal education.
- Design projects that you feel to be real, relevant, and important to you.
- Determine a fixed end date and ensure that the results are consistent with the strategy and priority of the organization.
- Benefit from various learning and development opportunities.
- Achieve an outcome where content and skills and practices improvement can be assessed.
- Encourage our culture of learning by developing projects that address an issue faced by the organization and its employees.

When choosing an action learning project topic, you should consider the following factors:

- Your topic selection should be derived from the knowledge you gained through a Cornell course.
- The topic of the project should be of interest to you and relate to your value to be meaningful.
- The project topic should consider an issue or topic that employees are concerned about, debating, or would benefit from gaining awareness.
- The project topic should align with the overall organizational strategy.
- The project should be manageable in scope and time.
- How the resolution of the issue and its implementation would impact the organization.

At the end of each learning cycle, you will demonstrate the knowledge you have gained in developing an action learning project. Each demonstration will be assessed by you, your direct manager, and other designated collaborator(s). **Only the action learning project content will be assessed.** For example, if the demonstration of your project content is delivered through a Lunch and Learn or slideshow presentation, **the delivery or slideshow will not be assessed.** Another example is if you could choose to demonstrate your acquired knowledge through a research report. **Only the content of the report will be assessed and not the formatting or styling of the report.** Should you choose to expand your audience invitation beyond your direct manager and designated collaborator(s), you will need to decide if your audience will complete the assessment. You will find the assessment rubrics in the toolkit. Your action learning project can be demonstrated through:

- Research reports.
- Videos.
- Slideshow presentations.
- Skit, roleplay, or simulation.
- Storytelling.
- Lunch and Learns.
- Educational courseware for the Academy.
- Or any other presentation aid.

Learning Support Methods

Learning support methods provide opportunities to receive support, guidance, and feedback on your action learning project. There are five different methods for learning support: mentorship, job shadowing, secondment, independent, or collaborative (team) projects. Your choice of learning support method is influenced by the desired outcome of your project and how it will be developed, presented, and assessed. The selected method should also take into consideration the skills and practices to be strengthened.

- Mentorship focuses on networking and relationships.
- Job shadowing focuses on short learning opportunities through observation.
- Secondment focuses on gaining insight through limited integration into a function or department.
- Independent or collaborative projects focus on strengthening individual and collaborative strengths.

Over the course of your two-year program, it is strongly recommended that you vary your choice of learning support method for each cycle. However, it is acceptable to choose one type of learning support that you use for each cycle.

Mentorship

Job Shadowing

Secondment

Independent Projects

Collaborative Projects

Critically Reflective Practice

Reflective practice involves thinking about your own experiences from a critical perspective. It requires you to examine the beliefs and assumptions that influence how you make sense and utilize your experiences. It can help you to integrate theory into practice, facilitate insight, and stimulate self-discovery. It may lead you to change your personal assumptions, broaden your perspectives, and lead to a more holistic understanding of complex or ambiguous situations. Reflective practice enables you to cultivate cognitive flexibility, critical thinking, active listening, and strategic decision-making.

Research has demonstrated that reflection on beliefs and assumptions, work environment, work relationships, and professional goals enable you to make more informed critical decisions. In listening, questioning, reflecting, and strategizing, you can explore your leadership abilities. Critical reflection should help you

determine your own growth in skills and practices, what could be improved on, and what has been successful.

Reflective practice starts with experience and leads to observation. It then leads to reflection about your experience and concludes with the development of new insights or conclusions. This will help you determine your actions in the future. There are four main steps in developing a reflective practice:

1. Concrete experience. Doing and having an experience. Learning and experiencing something new.
2. Reflective observation. Reviewing and reflecting on the experience. Learning by observing the concrete experience and then reflecting on it. You should consider the strengths of the experience as well as areas of development. How did this experience strengthen a skill or practice? Consider how you can duplicate this experience for success in future cycles. You should also consider the negative aspects of the experience, what you can learn from them, and how to avoid them in future cycles.
3. Abstract conceptualization. Concluding and learning from the experience. Formation of abstract thoughts.
4. Active experimentation. Planning and trying out what you have learned. How will you implement what you learned?

Reflective practice should occur throughout your involvement in the Program. Without reflection to stimulate learning from experience, actions and thought patterns might not link to affect change. Reflective practice deepens the quality of learning. It will:

- Enable you to understand your own learning intentions.
- Increase your active involvement in learning and your personal ownership of learning.
- Support you in assessing your areas of growth and what you will need to consider continuing to improve.
- Support you in developing future action learning cycles.

Using critically reflective practice for rubric assessment

Throughout each Learning cycle ask yourself four key questions:

1. What am I learning from this experience?
2. How do I feel about this experience?
3. What will I do the same or differently in the future?
4. How can I use what I have learned from this experience to improve future learning cycles?

Set time aside when developing your action plan to allow for reflection. The objective of critical reflective practice is to support your completion of the

assessment rubrics. Rubrics will help you determine for yourself your improvement in *skills and practices*. The following tools are available to help you develop your critical reflection practice, if you choose to use them.

Reflective Practice Tools

Assessment Rubrics

Rubric is a guided evaluation process that will help you to analyze your development of skills and practices and maximize your learning.

The *skills and practices* rubric will be completed by you and your direct manager over the two-year program. The rubric has two sides; one will be completed by you and the other by your direct manager. You will need to meet five times during your two-year program to complete the *skills and practices rubric*. Before each meeting to work on the rubric, you should discuss how this experience develops your core competencies by using critical reflective discussion. Your critical reflective discussion can then be translated into your assessment. The *skills and practices* assessment rubric is available in the toolkit.

The *project content* rubric should be completed by the designated collaborator(s) for each action learning cycle. You will need to meet with your collaborator(s) five times during a cycle to complete this rubric. If your collaborators differ from cycle to cycle you will need to meet with them five times each cycle. Through critical reflective discussion you and your collaborator(s) will grade your improvement in each component. The sample reflection assessment tool can be found in the toolkit.