

Leadership Series
By Ashley Rhodes

At our organization we spend a lot of time focusing on onboarding employees and training them initially but lacked a program that helped them build their leadership skills once they were in a position. There are several team members that have taken a leadership role for the first time in our organization so we want to help give them a skill set they can continue to build on in their career. With the creation of a simple leadership series we have been able to do that.

The leadership series meets once a month for 5 months to cover various topics that will help team members gain skills to lead their teams better. We start with identifying leadership style so they know what kind of leader they are and what some of their limitations may be. We will cover topics such as communication, listening, dealing with difficult situations, problem solving, and delegation. Each session will build on concepts from the prior session and everything will tie back to how they adapt their leadership style to fit different situations. Each session will have different assignments the participants will need to complete prior to the next class however these assignments are short and do not take them more than an hour.

I had team members apply for the series and kept the class to just 8 participants for our first time. We wanted to have a small group that felt comfortable sharing and engaging with each other. We utilized a selection committee to pick the team members that participated. The questionnaire the team members used to apply was fairly simple and I developed a rubric for our selection committee to be able to pick the candidates that would benefit the most from attending the series.

My goal with the leadership series is to empower our team members and help them build their leadership skills for their teams. Hopefully they will feel like we are invested in their growth and continue their careers with our organization. Ultimately it will give us stronger, more confident leaders and stronger teams.

Currently we are in the process of our first class and have already seen some benefits from the series. The participants are keeping each other accountable with being positive leaders and making sure they are completing their given assignments. We also see some of our participants coming out of their shell and being more assertive with their leadership style. Once our first group goes through the entire series I can utilize their feedback to make the series stronger and we can continue to host this series a few times a year with new team members.