



NEFI Management Development Program

for Key Staff at Retail Heating Fuel Companies
in partnership with Quinnipiac University Corporate Training

November 2018 – May 2019

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS



You've got great people.

They've grown your business to where you are today.

Give them the tools to be successful tomorrow.



Quinnipiac
Corporate Training

ANALYTICAL THINKING SKILLS

Organize, Assess and Communicate Data for Effective Decision Making

How You Will Benefit

Managers and employees make decisions every day based on personal experience, conventional wisdom, widely accepted best practices, or even the latest trend in business thinking. And, in many situations, the decisions may be appropriate. But how do you know for sure? Analytical thinking, or the ability to systematically and logically work through an issue, focuses on using evidence as the basis for decision making. The Center for Evidence-Based Management lists numerous benefits to using an analytical approach when making decisions. It states that judgments based on hard data are more accurate than those based on individual experience. According to a study published in Harvard Business Review, the best decision makers are “informed skeptics” who possess strong analytical skills. However, only 38% of employees fall into this category.

Course Objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your ability to:

- Follow a systematic process that leads to objective, verifiable conclusions.
- Focus on and gather the information required to address the issue.
- Assess the data you gather by following the principles of logic and reasoning.
- Communicate your analysis in a relatable and clear manner.
- Use your analysis to effect objective decision making.

Key Topics Covered

This course explores the following subjects in depth:

- What differentiates analytical thinking from critical thinking.
- How to clearly define the issue in a way that focuses on what you want to know and why you want to know it.
- Determining what information you’ll need to address the issue.

Key Topics Covered (Continued)

- What resources can be used for varying types of information and how to isolate the highest-quality data in each.
- Using the principles of logic and reasoning to develop a hypothesis or conclusion that can be tested.
- Understanding the difference between correlation and causation.
- How to avoid bias and surface hidden assumptions.
- Creating visual aids that clearly convey your analysis and the evidence that supports it.
- The ways you can apply your analysis so that it encourages objective decision making.

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWS

An Evidence-Based Approach to Hiring the Right Candidate

How You Will Benefit

A survey by CareerBuilder found that 69 percent of organizations have been adversely affected by a bad hire in the past year. A bad hire was considered someone with any of the following issues: poor performance, failure to get along with others, negative attitude, attendance problems, and complaints from customers. The consequences included any of the following: lost productivity, time required to hire and train another person, drag on morale throughout the department or organization, loss of sales, and legal issues.

A survey by Robert Half Finance & Accounting found that poor performance was the number one reason that resulted in a failed hire. A poor skills match was the second most-cited reason. In addition, failed hires result from a “culture clash,” where the new hire doesn’t fit in with the company culture. Behavioral interviewing is an evidence-based approach for ensuring you hire the right person for the job, effectively minimizing all of these potential problems.

Course Objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your ability to:

- Identify general competencies and translate them into performance criteria.
- Recognize the characteristics of and effectively develop behavioral-based questions.
- Explore useful techniques for reviewing resumes.
- Identify the elements to look for in candidates’
- answers to behavioral-based questions.
- Follow a structured method for evaluating candidates objectively.

Key Topics Covered

This course explores the following subjects in depth:

- Developing a list of general competencies needed for the position.

Key Topics Covered (Continued)

- Translating general competencies into detailed performance criteria.
- Using general competencies and performance criteria to develop behavioral-based questions.
- Recognizing the characteristics of effective behavioral-based questions.
- Developing behavioral-based questions according to the competencies necessary for the position and the organizational culture.
- Knowing when and how to develop appropriate follow-up questions.
- General tips for reviewing resumes, including how to apply the “SPOT” process.
- Targeting areas on a resume that will need further explanation or clarification during the interview.
- General tips for interviewing candidates and conducting an interview with colleagues.
- Identifying the three most important elements to look for in a candidate’s answer to a behavioral-based question.
- Understanding the behavioral interview process from multiple perspectives.
- Using a structured method for evaluating candidates objectively.
- Creating a candidate evaluation form.

COACHING CONVERSATIONS

How You Will Benefit

Coaching skills can be applied to a variety of situations. Common coaching situations involve the "big picture" view of identifying a satisfying life path, or a more detailed view of improving performance in specific areas. In all situations, coaching is about tapping into a potential that would otherwise be idle, and using it for the benefit of the employee and the company. According to the International Coach Foundation, coaching improves work performance by 70 percent, time management by 57 percent, and team effectiveness by 51 percent.

Coaching also impacts the manager or supervisor who coaches. A Results Coaching Systems study surveyed 30 supervisors who had been trained in coaching techniques. The coaches reported that they changed their managerial style to better empower their staff, with 60 percent feeling more valued by team members and 40 percent feeling more valued by their immediate boss.

This course reviews some basic coaching situations and expands upon them to give participants a chance to practice applying the skills in different situations. This course will establish the context of a situation, then allow the participants a chance to practice or evaluate a portion of a coaching session. As a result, you will be able to target specific areas for improvement, motivate and inspire individuals, communicate more effectively as a coach, and increase job satisfaction for your employees and yourself.

Course Objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your ability to:

- Identify the four steps of a coaching session and how they are applied in various contexts.
- Recognize the correct application of inquiry and advocacy in a coaching session.
- Apply basic coaching techniques to coaching for:
 - Performance improvement
 - Career development
 - Training for specific skills
 - Coaching a business team

Key Topics Covered

This course explores the following subjects in depth:

- The four-step process for conducting a coaching session.
- Types of questions to ask during coaching sessions.
- Inquiry and advocacy as communication techniques.
- Coaching for performance improvement, career development, and training specific skills.
- How to be an effective business team coach and empower team members.
- The four-step process of learning from mistakes.

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

How You Will Benefit

In today's fast-paced workplace, decisions often have to be made quickly, effectively and without doubt. It is increasingly important for employees to be able to think critically on their own. When employees excel at critical thinking, they can assess all possible approaches to a problem and choose the best solution confidently and calmly.

Executives repeatedly highlight critical thinking skills as a sought-after trait in new hires and current employees. The AMA Critical Skills Survey asked 2,115 managers and executives to assess the importance of critical thinking skills. Seventy-two percent agreed that current employees' success is measured by their critical thinking skills. When asked if their organizations make an effort to assess critical thinking when hiring new employees, seventy-six percent said yes.

This course will enable you to learn the components of critical thinking and avoid blocks to critical thinking. As a result, you'll be able to think more creatively and independently, make better decisions by problem solving systematically, identify the value of ideas and reach well-reasoned conclusions.

Course Objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your ability to:

- Define critical thinking.
- Identify and adopt the characteristics of critical thinking.
- Recognize and avoid critical thinking mistakes.
- Identify assumptions.
- Evaluate information accurately and thoroughly.
- Distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Implement the critical thinking process in business situations.

Key Topics Covered

This course explores the following subjects in depth:

- How critical thinking enables you to think creatively, solve problems systematically, and detects inconsistencies in reasoning.

Key Topics Covered (Continued)

- The Johari Window of awareness.
- Critical thinking mistakes like rationalization, emotional thinking, forms of bias, and tunnel vision.
- How examination, exploration and evaluation can be used to heighten your critical thinking.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

A Scientifically Proven Method for Developing the Skills of Success

How You Will Benefit

Motivated business professionals are looking for every edge to be successful in the workplace. Naturally, many develop expertise in technical or task-oriented skills in order to enhance their careers. However, those who have a high level of awareness and control over their emotions and use their emotions to connect with others and develop positive relationships, will find even greater success in the workplace.

This soft skill is known as emotional intelligence, and it is an essential element in the business world, especially in high-stress environments. If you are unable to control your emotions, they can preoccupy your thoughts and interfere with your ability to evaluate a situation objectively. On the contrary, knowing what triggers your emotional responses and understanding how to exercise self-control over them enables you to confront difficult issues and manage change with clarity and composure.

This program is designed to provide you with the knowledge and tools to develop your emotional intelligence. You'll learn how to avoid self-sabotaging outcomes by altering how you perceive and respond to emotionally-charged situations. In addition, you'll improve your ability to resolve conflict constructively, create a productive work environment, build and mend relationships, and bounce back from setbacks and disappointment.

Course Objectives

This course will help you to:

- Manage your emotions by recognizing how thoughts and emotions are connected.
- Improve your self-control by identifying physical cues that indicate your emotions may be taking over.
- Discover how emotional intelligence can help you develop more positive relationships at work and a more optimistic outlook.
- Learn how to use assertive communication to express your needs and feelings appropriately.

Course Objectives (Continued)

- Explore how to use emotional intelligence to bounce back from setbacks.

Key Topics Covered

This course explores the following subjects in depth:

- How to develop your self-awareness by discovering how thoughts drive feelings and recognizing your physical cues that emotions are arising.
- Learning to prevent emotional-hijacking by using techniques for collecting your thoughts.
- How to develop more positive relationships with others at work through empathy.
- Improving communication by building assertiveness skills.
- Using your emotions as a tool to improve the process of conflict resolution.
- Responding more quickly and positively to changing priorities and situations.
- Keeping your composure and staying focused in stressful or high-pressure situations.
- How to reframe thinking, change perspective, and bounce back from setbacks.

LEADERSHIP 101

How You Will Benefit

Being a leader inherently implies having a lot of responsibility. What that responsibility is can vary among leadership roles, but there are some universal ways to be a leader. Enthusiasm, having a vision, problem-solving, promoting teamwork, and delegating tasks are all forms of leadership, but may not come naturally to every leader. And when a leader is not up to shape, it reflects on the organization or team as a whole.

For instance, a poll by the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard University reported that 70% of Americans blame leadership crisis as a factor in the national economic decline. A Deloitte survey showed top American executives majority of CXOs surveyed (52 percent) and CXOWs (59 percent) do not think that their direct reports have the skills to assume greater leadership roles in the organization.

This course will give you the tools you need to hone your skills as a leader, from earning trust and respect, to leading through crisis and creating a vision to share. As a result, you will have more confidence in your ability to lead, will inspire a more collaborative work environment, and will be able to lead through any situation.

Course Objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your ability to:

- Identify key characteristics of leaders.
- Build trust and confidence with employees.
- Avoid behaviors that undermine leadership.
- Promote teamwork and esprit de corps.
- Act decisively.
- Demonstrate leadership in a crisis.

Key Topics Covered

This course explores the following subjects in depth:

- How to have and share a vision.
- How to set expectations, communicate effectively, and be trustworthy.
- Methods of building confidence in your employees.
- Benefits of being enthusiastic.
- Behaviors that signal serving.

Key Topics Covered (Continued)

- Pitfalls to avoid such as lack of transparency, neglect, and unwillingness to change or innovate.
- How to influence others and promote teamwork.
- How to be a leader during a crisis.

LEADING OTHERS THROUGH CHANGE

A Three-Phase Model for Success

How You Will Benefit

Change is here to stay. That's probably no secret to you. For years we've all heard that the "only constant is change." Change is present in every aspect of your life and has become the norm in all organizations. The frequency and pace at which leaders must ask employees to change course or adapt to new systems and initiatives continues to accelerate.

The word "crisis" in the Chinese language is composed of two characters: one represents danger and the other represents opportunity. Change has the same negative and positive connotation. It can be antagonistic, undesirable, and perilous; or it can be pleasant, welcomed, and exciting. It is a leader's job to identify the positive prospects and communicate the opportunity that change imposes upon the organization.

Leading others through change successfully requires thoughtful planning and innovative options. This course will provide you with a clearer understanding of what happens to people when an organizational change initiative occurs. It also introduces the tools and techniques you can use to more effectively lead change efforts in your organization, ultimately allowing you to leave the course feeling better prepared to address the myriad of changes that come your way.

Course Objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your ability to:

- Understand why change initiatives fail and how to ensure their success.
- Implement a framework to actively lead change efforts.
- Plan for the success of future change through close evaluation of the current initiative.
- Identify, acknowledge, and manage resistance to ensure an efficient transition.
- Apply techniques for increasing and gaining commitment to the change.

Key Topics Covered

This course explores the following subjects in depth:

- The three phases of the ACT model that help to guide specific steps in leading the change effort.
- Tactics for communicating the vision and goals of your organization's change initiative.
- How to assess your organization's environment to determine its readiness for change.
- Increasing employee commitment and motivation for the change by establishing good communication skills.
- The importance of data collection and the numerous outlets for gathering it.
- Identifying common reasons for resistance and how to manage them at all levels.
- Organizing the change effort by designing the implementation and completing a RACI chart.
- Making the change a lasting part of the culture.
- How to evaluate the impact, process, and leader of the current initiative to plan for the success of future change efforts.

PRODUCTIVE WORK HABITS

How You Will Benefit

The modern work world is full of distractions. Private e-mails, social media, the Internet, and chatty co-workers cut into productivity and prompt procrastination. Yet work left unfinished today becomes a mountain of work due tomorrow, making a lack of productivity one of the biggest causes of profit loss for organizations.

A national survey conducted by Harris Poll included a representative sample of 2,175 hiring and human resource managers across industries and company sizes. The managers said that the consequences of distraction were compromised quality of work, lower moral because of other employees having to pick up the slack, negative impact on boss/ employee relationships, missed deadlines and loss in revenue.

This course is designed to teach employees how to kick bad habits and stay more focused on work throughout the day. As a result, employees will work at a higher level, be able to more effectively prioritize tasks, improve relationships with coworkers and bosses, and create long-lasting behavioral changes.

Course Objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your ability to:

- Recognize the difference between true productivity and “fake” productivity.
- Prioritize your daily work based on your key results.
- Improve your ability to focus.
- Eliminate habits that detract from your productivity.
- Work effectively with colleagues.
- Cultivate the nine habits that will increase your productivity.

Key Topics Covered

This course explores the following subjects in depth:

- Benefits of working productively.
- Identifying your purpose and prioritizing key results.
- Focusing on outcomes and planning your day.

Key Topics Covered (Continued)

- Evidence against multi-tasking.
- How to minimize interruptions and find immersion in activities.
- The law of diminishing returns.
- How to break bad habits like procrastination, negativity, and succumbing to distractions.

SUPER MANAGER

Be the Boss Everyone Wants to Work For

How You Will Benefit

Many studies have been conducted to determine the reasons that employees leave their jobs. Most reasons point squarely to their bosses:

- 39% said their supervisors didn't keep their promises.
- 37% said their supervisors failed to give credit when due.
- 31% said their supervisors gave them the "silent treatment."
- 27% said their supervisors made negative comments about them to others.
- 23% said their supervisors blamed others to cover up their own mistakes or embarrassment.

As a result, employees reported feeling more tension, mistrust, and exhaustion, and were less satisfied and less likely to take on additional tasks or work longer hours. In other words, managers directly affect their employees' productivity and satisfaction in the workplace. In another study, 44% of employees said that their individual supervisor was the most important factor in increasing employee engagement. And when employees are engaged, 70% say they have a good understanding of how to meet customer needs (versus 17% of nonengaged employees), 78% would recommend their company's products or services (versus 3% of nonengaged), and 86% say they very often feel happy at work (versus 11% of nonengaged). The bottom line: Managers influence employees' satisfaction at work, for better or worse. This program will help you become a super manager—someone who everyone wants to work for.

Course Objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your ability to:

- Develop self-awareness regarding your managerial skills and display attentiveness to your employees.
- Demonstrate consistency in your values, attitude, and behavior.
- Identify when and how to appropriately exercise mental flexibility.

Course Objectives (Continued)

- Display humility and confidence in your decisions as a manager and show confidence in your employees.
- Ensure that employees maintain focus.
- Encourage employee satisfaction and motivation by creating a fun working environment.

Key Topics Covered

This course explores the following subjects in depth:

- Common obstacles to being a super manager.
- Key opposing characteristics necessary for managerial success and how to properly balance them.
- Increasing your self-awareness through feedback, after-action reports, and reflection.
- Showing attentiveness to individual employees by helping them to set career goals and tailoring recognition for achievements.
- Practical examples for expressing consistency in your values, attitude, and behavior.
- Appropriate circumstances for using mental flexibility and intelligent disobedience in the workplace.
- Characteristics and benefits of humility as well as techniques for demonstrating it.
- How to avoid micromanagement in order to show confidence in employees' abilities.
- Tips for being a confident decision maker and combatting indecisiveness.
- How to remain results-oriented and resolve performance issues in employees.
- Various ways to foster a fun workplace.

THE TOUGHEST SUPERVISOR CHALLENGES And How to Overcome Them

How You Will Benefit

A supervisor plays more roles than just the overseer. Supervisors often have to be mentors, delegators, diplomats, and disciplinarians. Therefore, supervisors have to know their employees' strengths, weaknesses, triggers, and apprehensions and have the communication skills necessary to effectively steer employees in the right direction.

No matter how poor an employee's behavior is, it is ultimately up to the supervisor to correct the behavior. Sometimes a bad supervisor can be the source of all the organization's problems. According to a Huffington Post survey, employees with bad managers are the least productive workers. In fact, 65% of respondents said they would take a new boss over a pay raise!

This course is designed to help you understand your organization's problems and challenges at a deeper level and give you the communication tools to become an inspiring supervisor. In this guide you will learn the proper recourse to take with problem employees to resolve problems, create goals, work through personal issues, and mediate conflict. As a result you will be better able to understand your employees' behavior and motives and react appropriately to them.

Course Objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your ability to:

- Use realism, restraint, and resolve when facing any tough challenge.
- Resolve conflicts between employees effectively.
- Deal with layoffs in a way that minimizes the negative effects.
- Show support for employees with performance issues while building a defensible case for discipline and/or termination if necessary.
- Deal with employees' personal problems with sensitivity and fairness.
- Take control and responsibility in a crisis situation.

Key Topics Covered

This course explores the following subjects in depth:

- Establish and following ground rules and frameworks to mediate conflict.
- The symptoms and solutions of working with employees who do not take initiative, know it- all's, whiners, and backstabbers.
- How to identify types of personal problems and general performance issues related to those problems.
- What problems absenteeism. Tardiness and inappropriate conduct might signal.
- The process of EAP (Employee Assistance Program).
- How to prepare termination and have a termination conversation with an employee.

TEAM EXCELLENCE

The Secret to Achieving High Performance

How You Will Benefit

According to a survey conducted by the Center for Creative Leadership, 91% of respondents agreed with the statement, “Teams are central to organizational success,” and 87% said, “Our team collaborating with other teams is essential for success.”

Clearly, teams are a vital part of almost every organization, which are depending on them to use resources more effectively, solve problems more creatively, and provide greater productivity than individual employees working alone.

The goal of every team is to perform at its highest level, and the secret to achieving high performance is this—having team members who CARE. Care in the literal sense, as well as in the sense of the acronym for the following traits: Communication, Ability, Results, and Esprit de corps. These four traits are the foundation of team excellence. You will find practical strategies for developing each trait throughout the remainder of the program.

Course Objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your ability to:

- Recognize the communication characteristics of high-performing teams and team members.
- Assess individual strengths in order to ensure the best possible team performance.
- Set goals successfully and avoid common goal-setting mistakes.
- Foster accountability among team members to ensure all members succeed.
- Develop esprit de corps and coordinate effective team-building activities.

Key Topics Covered

This course explores the following subjects in depth:

- How to ensure team members talk and listen equally, display energy, connect with one another, converse informally, and hold productive “idea” conversations.

Key Topics Covered (Continued)

- Key considerations for assembling teams to create synergy and maximize performance.
- Goal-setting mistakes to avoid and techniques for setting goals that produce success and encourage member commitment to achieving those goals.
- The meaning of accountability and how to implement it within your team.
- Characteristics of ownership, integrity, connectedness, and confidence or the four elements that build esprit de corps.
- Ways to capitalize on new ideas, foster creativity, and ensure members continuously improve their skills.
- Dos and Don'ts for organizing effective team-building activities.

THE TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADER

Inspiring and Motivating Others to Achieve New Levels of Success

How You Will Benefit

Transformational leadership is an approach to leading others that "...causes change in individual and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing followers into leaders."

In plain English, transformational leadership creates important, positive change. It is grounded in the belief that inspiring others to focus on the greater good produces a level of excellence that exceeds results achieved by other forms of leadership.

This program will walk you through the four components to transformational leadership – calling, charisma, challenge, and caring – allowing you to develop the skills and techniques required to make a real difference at your workplace and to inspire others to work toward a shared vision of positive change.

Course Objectives

Successful completion of this course will increase your ability to:

- Carry out the four components of transformational leadership.
- Identify your calling and share it with passion and purpose.
- Develop the elements of charisma and share impactful stories with others.
- Help others engage in critical thinking.
- Implement ideas to encourage creativity and innovation.
- Make personal connections with your followers and encourage their growth.

Key Topics Covered

This course explores the following subjects in depth:

- Techniques for realizing what drives your passion and energy.
- How to engage others in the change process and inspire ownership.
- Ways to exhibit self-confidence and show genuine interest in others.

Key Topics Covered (Continued)

- How to use story-telling to foster support and commitment to your calling.
- Ways to empower followers to think independently and to take bold actions.
- Demonstrating cognitive, emotional, and compassionate empathy toward followers.

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