

AURORA

FOUNDATION

Virtual Leadership Program:

Course Overview



Our highly regarded virtual program leverages a coaching approach to develop and refine essential leadership skills, specifically tailored to the GLAM sector. Over the course of 7 weeks, we'll engage in meaningful conversations and reflective thinking, exploring the leadership qualities that drive effectiveness in changing environments. It's the interactive nature of this program - where deep reflection and peer learning are prioritised - that makes it oversubscribed each year. We're thrilled that you can join us!

1. Self-awareness: strengths-based leadership in VUCA

In this opening session, we introduce the concept of VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity) and explore its implications for leadership in the GLAM sector. This sets the stage for understanding why self-awareness is a critical leadership skill, enabling leaders to navigate complexity more effectively. You will be invited to complete the free VIA Character Strengths survey prior to our next session, providing valuable data that will serve as a foundation for reflection and integration throughout the program.

2. The authenticity paradox

Building on Week 1, this session challenges you to move beyond simply identifying your strengths and toward a deeper understanding of how they show up in practice. Using your VIA Character Strengths results as a foundation, we'll explore the idea that authenticity is not always about leading from preference but rather knowing when to adjust your strengths for greater impact. We introduce the concept of the 'authenticity paradox'- that being true to ourselves sometimes requires stepping outside our comfort zone. Drawing

on the ACT Matrix, a practical psychology tool, you will examine your 'away' and 'towards' side in action. This framework provides a powerful lens for recognising patterns, making intentional choices, and leading with purpose.

3. Expanding perspectives through coaching & curiosity

Session 3 shifts the focus from internal reflection to applied leadership practice, emphasising the power of awareness in our relationship with others. We'll explore the modern leader's role as 'coach', learning how curiosity and presence can transform conversations and outcomes. We introduce perceptual positioning to examine how different perspectives - yours and others' - can reveal blind spots and challenge assumptions in how we interpret behaviour and intent. Building on insights from the ACT matrix, we will consider how habitual responses, or entrenched narratives may limit your effectiveness in interpersonal dynamics. Through a peer 'Board of Advisors' activity, the cohort will support one another in unpacking real-world challenges, applying the tools, and experimenting with new responses.

4. Digital transformation & leading through change

As the GLAM sector evolves through digital transformation and shifting expectations, leaders are increasingly called upon to guide their teams through uncertainty. In this session, we explore how to lead with stability and clarity during times of disruption. We will examine the role of purpose, not only at the organisational level, but as a powerful tool to anchor individuals when roles and functions are in flux. Additionally, we'll discuss the importance of digital literacy and how it empowers leaders to navigate technological change.

5. Confidence versus competence versus comfort

This session delves into the often-blurred lines between confidence, competence, and comfort - understanding how misinterpreting these signals can hinder leadership effectiveness. We challenge the assumption that confidence always feels comfortable, reframing discomfort as a potential indicator of growth rather than a red flag to retreat. Through the lens of emotional agility, you will learn how to stay grounded and effective even when faced with difficult emotions. Whether preparing for a challenging conversation, managing upwards, stepping into a new role, or presenting publicly, this session offers practical tools that will help you respond to challenges with clarity and courage, rather than avoidance.

6. Collective leadership

Always a cohort favourite, in this session you will work closely with mentors from The Aurora Board who will share their leadership journeys, insights, and personal stories. Building on the themes explored throughout the program, the mentors will offer their perspectives on navigating VUCA in GLAM, leading through change, and cultivating self-efficacy. Through small group discussions and group-led questions, you will have the opportunity to deepen your learning by exploring real-world leadership dilemmas with these seasoned mentors. This session highlights the power of collective leadership - leveraging mentorship, support, and collaboration for growth.

7. Putting it into practice: action planning

In the final session, we focus on the transition from theory and reflection to tangible action. While insights and answers are important, true leadership development occurs through practice. You will reflect on the lessons and tools from the previous six weeks and create actionable plans for applying them in a real-world leadership context. Through structured action planning, you'll identify key areas for growth, set measurable goals, and outline concrete steps to implement your learning. This session encourages a commitment to continuous development, viewing leadership growth as an ongoing journey rather than a final understanding of self. *What is the leadership story you are taking away and how is this different to the story you commenced with?*

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