

Leading Under Pressure

Taking the Lead When It Matters Most

20-22 April 2026

Dubai



QUEEN
HEDVIG
ACADEMY



STANFORD RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Welcome from the Founder of Queen Hedvig Academy

We extend a warm invitation to executives worldwide to join our Leading Under Pressure program. This unique learning journey is designed to empower leaders to act with confidence and clarity in times of complexity and adversity.

In today's world, where volatility is the new normal, true leadership emerges not in times of comfort, but when navigating pressure and disruption. This edition of the Program focuses on the human side of leadership – how people react to crisis, how leaders build trust, and how teams perform when it matters most.

Through engaging content, real-life examples, and expert guidance, participants will strengthen their capacity to lead under pressure and emerge stronger from every challenge.

We firmly believe that this program will establish the foundation for developing leaders who can strengthen their organizations' resilience and identify growth opportunities, even during times of crisis and turbulence.

*Get ready to lead when
it matters most*

prof. Radosław Koszewski
Founder of Queen Hedvig Academy



Partnership with Aspire HR Consultants UAE

Leading under pressure is a daily reality for executives operating in the Middle East. Rapid growth, transformation agendas, complex stakeholder environments, and continuous change require leaders to make clear decisions, build trust, and sustain performance – often under intense pressure.

To ensure the Leading Under Pressure program is deeply relevant to leaders in the region, Aspire HR Consultants UAE is proud to be a partner in the program that brings a regional perspective and grounding global leadership frameworks in real-life business contexts across the GCC and the wider Middle East.

Rania Abdalla
Founder & Managing Director,
Aspire HR Consultants UAE



About the Program

This intensive edition of the Leading Under Pressure program equips leaders to respond effectively in moments of crisis, uncertainty, and stress. It draws from the psychology of decision-making, emotional resilience, and leadership failure, delivering practical insights you can immediately apply.

Understanding that behind turbulences and critical situations lie complex stories: missteps and leadership breakdowns, but also remarkable achievements and triumphs under pressure, you will explore the origins of such events and how they are handled. We will uncover vital leadership lessons with relevance far beyond the crisis itself—lessons that apply directly to business and everyday challenges.

You'll gain a deep understanding of how the brain responds to stress and ambiguity, and how to recognize critical warning signs before it's too late.

Engaging case studies bring real-world scenarios to life, showing how emotions influence decisions in high-pressure environments. You'll learn proven techniques to stay clear-headed and effective when it matters most.

This journey also prompts you to reflect on your own leadership style and strengthen your ability to build resilient, high-performing teams—especially when the stakes are high.

Whether you're guiding a team through complexity or making split-second decisions with lasting impact, this program gives you the clarity, confidence, and competence to perform.

Join a global network of executives who don't just endure pressure—they lead through it. Become a part of our world-class alumni community.

"In today's extremely complex world, it is paramount for leaders to be equipped to deal effectively with unexpected high-pressure situations."

Sameh Abadir - Professor of Leadership and Negotiations at IMD; former professor at INSEAD; Chairman of his family business, which is based in Egypt with operations across the Middle East and Africa.

Is the program right for you?

This program is designed for ambitious, emotionally intelligent leaders who are ready to thrive in uncertainty and guide others through complexity.

We're looking for individuals who want to lead with clarity, courage, and connection — who understand pressure not just as a threat, but as a catalyst for growth.

If you're ready to sharpen your decision-making, strengthen team resilience, and lead change with confidence, this journey is for you. Step forward and become a leader who turns turbulence into opportunity.

Typical participants have over 10 years of experience in management and come from a wide range of sectors, functions, and geographies.

Leading Under Pressure program aims at:

- ▶ Experienced organizational or team leaders who want to strengthen leadership resilience.
- ▶ Senior executives navigating complexity, risk, and high responsibility
- ▶ Leaders in high-stakes industries
- ▶ Teams seeking alignment and a shared crisis leadership approach

Key benefits

Combining interactive learning, powerful case studies, and individual reflection, the Leading Under Pressure program will enable you to lead with clarity, energy, and agility in the most demanding conditions.

<p>1. Strengthen your leadership confidence and resilience in turbulent times.</p> <hr/>	<p>5. Cultivate psychological safety and high team performance.</p> <hr/>
<p>2. Enhance decision-making under stress and time pressure.</p> <hr/>	<p>6. Apply powerful tools for business continuity and crisis recovery.</p> <hr/>
<p>3. Lead with emotional awareness to build trust and connection.</p> <hr/>	<p>7. Reframe disruption as opportunity for innovation and growth.</p> <hr/>
<p>4. Detect early warning signs of human error and system breakdowns.</p>	<p>8. Examine how networks of stakeholders can build resilience in high-stress situations.</p>

Content

► **Self-Paced Preparation Phase**

► **Leading in Uncertainty**

► **Emotions and Critical Situations**

► **Team and Organizational Resilience**

► **Action, Recovery and Integration**

Content

Pre-Program Preparation

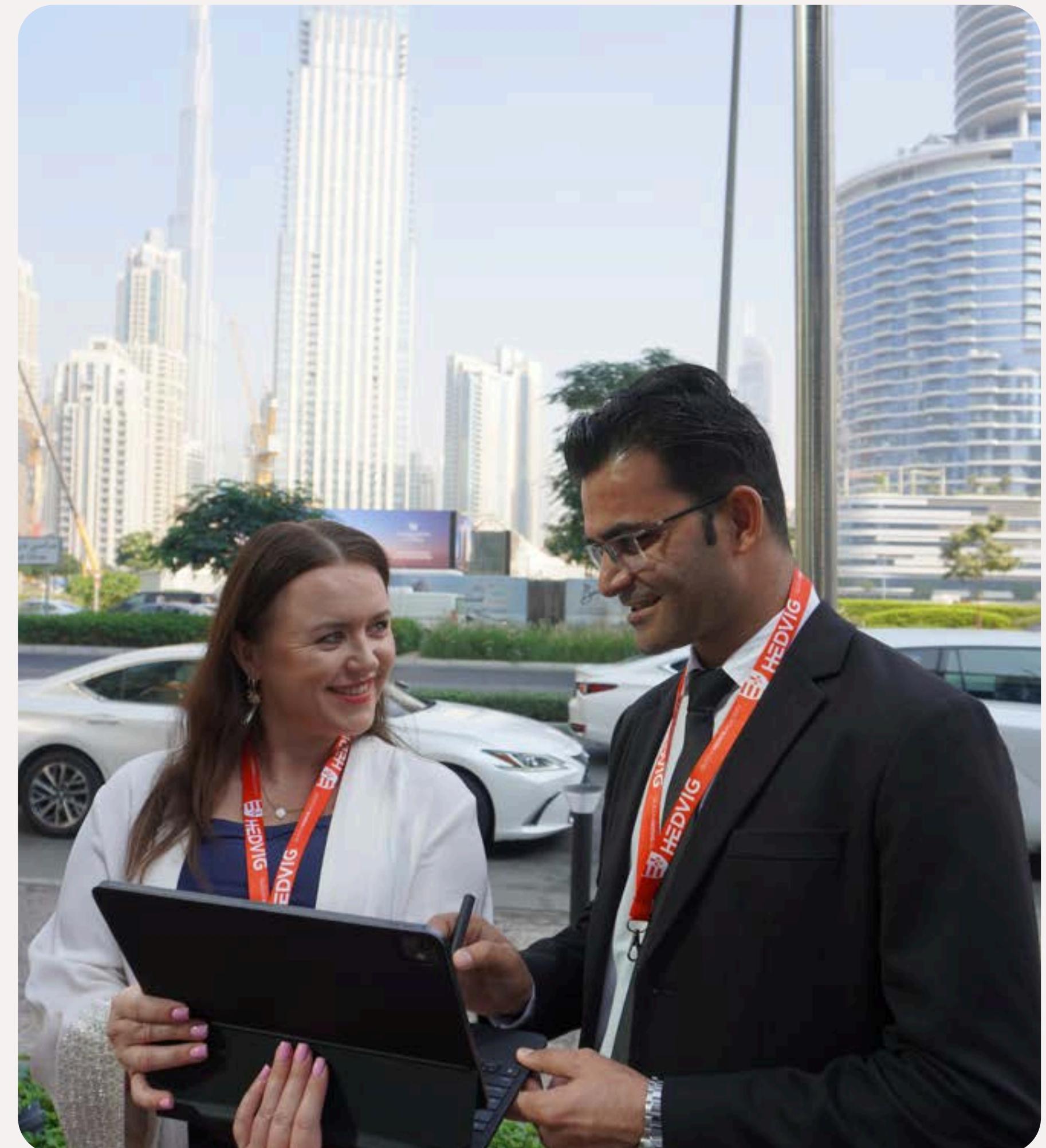
Inquiring

Starting six weeks before the program, participants will engage in a self-paced preparation phase.

They will reflect on their personal leadership experiences—both successes and failures in high-stakes situations—and explore recent case studies involving pressure, human error, and leadership breakdowns.

This phase is also an opportunity to reconsider their purpose, role, and leadership practices in times of complexity and uncertainty.

Finally, participants will craft the key questions that will guide their personal learning journey throughout the program.



Content

Three days of sessions on campus

Mapping

- » Learn lessons from high pressure situations through case studies, interactive dialogues, and stories of guest speakers.
- » Identify different sources of crisis within the context of your leadership practices: human error, organizational sources, structural, and systemic factors.
- » Pinpoint zones of stress for you and your team.
- » Map your ecosystem of stakeholders with a view to forming a resilient fabric of relationships.

Connecting

- » Identify the connection between human error and organizational failure in the role played by leadership.
- » Understand how stress, uncertainty and turmoil impact your emotions and responses as a leader.
- » Be aware of your internal and external sources of resilience and pathways back to high energy levels.
- » Reflect on how you can build strong and interdependent networks of teams in your organization.
- » Connect your learnings experientially through a VR simulation.

Exploring

- » Examine leadership approaches to eradicate the roots of failure at the individual and collective level: Mindset, connection, dialogue, psychological trust, relational capital.
- » Discover how to decode signals of stress and risk to prevent crisis.
- » Gain practical tools to build more resilient organizations.
- » Understand how interdependent teams can achieve high performance.
- » Delve into actions that enable you and your team to respond effectively in turmoil, prevent human error, and enable business continuity.

Content

Self-paced integration over six weeks post program

▶ **Integrating, envisioning, and enacting**

- » Apply the key learnings from the program to your professional and personal context by engaging in practical exercises and small-scale experiments — some of which you'll co-create with a partner.
- » Take advantage of a one-hour coaching session to reflect on your development, explore emerging perspectives, and refine your understanding of your leadership role in guiding your team and organization toward future opportunities



Methodology

► Applied Learning

During the program, we will be using lots of “real challenge assignments” and application exercises for participants to put the Program’s insights, frameworks, and models in action.

► Leadership Story

Participants will share their personal leadership stories and successes, receive valuable input on their leadership challenges, and both inspire and be inspired through peer-to-peer leadership stories and personal exchanges.

► Experiences from Different Industries

Sharing knowledge, learning the opinions of others and building relationships with experienced executives from different industries refines one’s ability to react quickly to changes in the market.

► Case Studies

This method uses real business situations and examples, encouraging participants to find workable and effective solutions to problems. Our case studies reflect universal problems common in all companies and are therefore valuable exercises for the Program’s participants.

► Workshops

The program provides the opportunity, as part of its curriculum, to engage in group work to exchange and integrate experiences while arriving at common solutions.

► Simulations

Simulations are interactive exercises which recreate everyday business situations and challenges. Simulation exercises provide managers with opportunities to test out and ‘dry run’ their ideas and recommendations and subsequently to assess their feasibility.

► Summarizing Sessions

At the end of each day of the program, there is a comprehensive concluding session, which helps the participants to consolidate their newly acquired knowledge and run through the most important takeaways of the day.

► Presentations

To facilitate the learning process and enhance interactivity, our faculty creates teaching materials of the highest quality for the benefit of the Program’s participants.

► Networking Opportunities

The networking events held during the program will grow the participants’ professional networks, as well as provide them with a chance to obtain new perspectives from outside their sector or corporate environment.

About Queen Hedvig Academy

► Experience

Queen Hedvig Academy team has more than 20 years of experience in designing and delivering educational programs tailored to the needs of the most demanding clients. Our diverse client portfolio includes leading global corporations, prominent Polish companies, organizations rooted in the CEE region, companies operating locally and those expanding their presence in European and global markets.

► Experts

We collaborate with renowned institutions such as IMD (Lausanne, Switzerland), Mahindra University (Hyderabad, India) and Stanford Research Institute (Silicon Valley, USA). Sessions in our programs are delivered by scholars and experts from top universities and research centers across the world.

► Networking

Our alumni have the opportunity to join one of the strongest alumni networks in the CEE region. Regularly organized alumni meetings, both formal and informal, provide a platform for the exchange of knowledge, experience, and contacts, as well as mutual business inspiration. These meetings foster a sense of belonging to an exclusive community of professionals who are constantly improving their competencies and skills.



About Stanford Research Institute International (SRI International)

► **What is SRI**

SRI International is a nonprofit, independent research center dedicated to serving government and industry clients. The company operates from its headquarters in Silicon Valley, as well as offices and laboratories throughout the United States and Tokyo. SRI's Center for Innovation Strategy and Policy (CISP) helps the organizations and regions in achieving long-term economic and social impacts through effective investments in science, technology, and innovation.

► **Innovations**

SRI has been a leader in pioneering technologies that have significantly influenced the modern world, to mention only a few of them: ARPANet, the foundation for today's internet; Da Vinci Surgical Robot, the first robotic surgery system, transforming precision and accessibility in medical procedures; Siri, the first virtual personal assistant; MOTOBOT, the first autonomous motorcycle; SynFin, an automated platform for chemical drug discovery and the first online banking solutions. These innovations highlight SRI's role in creating solutions that enhance safety, health, and productivity globally.



Faculty



Sameh Abadir

The Program Academic Director;
Professor of Leadership and
Negotiation

Areas of Research and Teaching:

- › negotiation
- › conflict management
- › crisis management
- › leadership



Joyce Azzam

President, MounTurtle
Mountaineering Academy;
UN Women Goodwill Ambassador

Fields of Expertise:

- › mountaineering
- › motivational speaking
- › conservation of cultural heritage sites
- › architecture

Faculty



Steve Ciesinski

Professor, the Stanford Graduate School of Business

Areas of Research and Teaching:

- › investment
- › business models
- › partnership arrangements



Peter Marcotullio

Vice President, Commercial R&D at SRI International

Areas of Research and Teaching:

- › business development
- › technology sales and marketing
- › innovation consulting

About Aspire HR Consultants UAE

► What is Aspire HR Consultants UAE

Founded and led by Rania Abdalla, Aspire HR Consultants UAE has extensive experience working with senior leaders, boards, and executive teams across multiple sectors. The firm has supported organizations through periods of growth, transformation, and challenge, with a strong focus on leadership effectiveness and organizational resilience.

They merge unparalleled local expertise with a global perspective, ensuring each search is tailored to unique needs. Experience a partnership that transcends recruitment, driving towards a customer's business success.

► Services

- » Executive Search
- » Board Placement
- » Talent Advisory
- » Leadership Assessments
- » Interim
- » HR Consultancy
- » Women Mentorship
- » Training Experiences
- » Digital HR Solutions



Date

20-22 April, 2026

PROGRAM FEES

General fee: **€ 4,900 net**

Alumni fee: **€ 4,300 net**

Multiple registrations from the same company (min. 3 participants):

€ 4,300 net

The fee includes the classroom materials as well as most of the expenses related to meals.

The fee does not include accommodation, transport, insurance costs.

[Link to Application form](#)



**Contact the Program Director
Middle East:**
Laila Farouk
+201222167197
laila.farouk@aspire-hr.com



**Contact the Program Director
Central and Eastern Europe:**
Robert Mazelanik
+48 786 819 139
rmazelanik@queenhedvig.eu

Queen Hedvig Academy
www.queenhedvig.eu

 13 Senatorska Street
00-075 Warsaw
Poland
+48 22 829 64 22

SRI International
www.sri.com

 Headquarters
333 Ravenswood Ave
Menlo Park, CA 94025
USA
+1 (650) 859-2000

Aspire HR Consultants
uae.aspire-hr.com

 Dubai - Headquarters
Sharjah Media City
334069 Sharjah
UAE

aspire-hr.com

 Silver Stars Business
Building Akhnatone Street
11835 Cairo
Egypt
+20 122 216 7197