



# CIMBA Italy Experiential Leadership

(MGMT 3999)

Consortium Institute of Management  
and Business Analysis  
Spring 2024

## LEAP

*A Personal Development Opportunity*

**Course for Credit**

(MGMT 3999)

**Micro-Credential**

Personal Development Certificates

### Support Staff:

**Dr. Al H. Ringleb** – Personal Development Scientist

**Cristina Turchet** – Process Scientist

**Anastasia Zgibneva** – Personal Development Coach

**Anna Fiumicetti** – Personal Development Coach

**Sergio Cabigiosu** – Experiential Trainer

**Angelo Balest** - LIFE and Live 2 Influence Trainer

**Nina Pagon** – LIFE Trainer

### Description

Over the past two decades, the workplace has change quite dramatically. In the past, employers focused almost solely on a student's technical skills, looking for those dedicated students who put extra effort into their technical development. But in today's world, technology is taking over more and more of those technical jobs every day. Employers are now looking for students with **well-developed soft skills** -- those crucial to effectiveness critical thinking, decision making and problem solving, interpersonal communications, relationship building, and team building skills and attributes. They are most interested in those students with the personal ability to be empathetic, confident, self-aware and build rapport. With growing emphasis on who you are rather than on what you know, effectiveness in teams has moved way up their list.

Research has shown that these crucial skills cannot be developed in a classroom setting alone but rather are best learned when experienced, and particularly when you have guidance and assistance in making sense of what you are experiencing. That same research is also showing that one of the best environments for such experiential learning is studying or living abroad. Being out of our comfort zones opens us up to self-discovery, awareness, and reflection, key, fundamental ingredients in soft skill development. Embracing the learning opportunities within a study abroad experience serves to sharpen social sensitivity and interpersonal communication skills and attributes, essential ingredients for an effective team member.

Created in direct cooperation with the business community and its leaders, the CIMBA LEAP program was specifically developed to assist dedicated and committed young professionals to get a big head start in today's rapidly changing work environment. Through its **KT Problems solving and decision-making, LIFE, and Live 2 Influence workshops, all implemented through experienced and dedicated coaches and facilitators**, personal development at CIMBA does exactly what its name implies: It gives you a great LEAP forward along your career path.

### The Objectives

The intent of the experience is to assist you in making sense of your study-abroad experience, assisting you in leveraging that self-discovery in building interpersonal skills that will set you apart in today's rapidly changing, technology-driven, work environment where interpersonal skills and attributes are becoming increasingly more important to career success.

Effective leaders and followers must possess an integrated combination of knowledge (IQ), critical thinking process skills (RQ), and fundamental behavioral traits and attributes (EQ). Building on traditional personal and leadership development models, which tend to highlight the knowledge component, LEAP places additional emphasis on critical thinking and behavior—the “people” components. Consistent with the self-discovery emphasis of the CIMBA study abroad experience, past students have referred to this course as a “behavioral laboratory for personal discovery.” Participants explore themselves from many different perspectives, learn how and why they do the things they do, and explore ways to improve crucial interpersonal skills.

## **The Tools and Techniques**

### **Making Sense of Your Travel Experiences**

The novelty of foreign travel heightens self-awareness, social awareness, and self-regulation, important ingredients in the behavior component of effective leadership and followership. Importantly, it increases receptivity to self-discovery, and provides an opportunity for personal and professional development unique in your college experience. To help you make sense of the unique personal developmental opportunities offered by study abroad, LEAP leverages experiential personal and group activities to provide you with an understanding of important emotional and critical thinking competencies.

### **The DaVinci Challenge**

The DaVinci Challenge is a one-day, outdoor, low-ropes team learning experience. In building important bonds, it focuses on collaboration, encourages active participation, and presents unending opportunities for self-discovery and team growth and development. Its various activities explore important leadership and communication concepts, promote critical thinking through structured problem solving and decision-making experiences, and emphasizes the importance of group support and coaching, all important skills and attributes to be developed in greater depth within the more formal CIMBA Personal Development System. Through direct experience, it emphasizes the team skills of enquiry, experiment, feedback, reflection, review, and cooperative learning. In its role as a bonding experience, the DaVinci Challenge serves to build important trust and accountability, by building meaningful relationships between and among participants. Its diverse activities encourage participants to respond positively to opportunities, challenges, and responsibilities, to manage risk, and to cope with change and adversity. Safety codes provide clear boundaries and learning goals give clear direction. The Da Vinci Challenge is an integral part of your CAP week activities.

### **Kepner Tregoe Problem-Solving and Decision Making**

Kepner Tregoe (KT) Problem-Solving and Decision-Making (PSDM) Workshop is a two-day personal and team learning experience. It focuses on assisting in the development of critical thinking and decision-making skills and attributes. From the standpoint of influence, it provides common language and common guidelines that greatly assists leaders in encouraging and directing rational thinking in teams where group think often derails effective issue resolution. In essence, KT is a structured methodology for gathering information, and then prioritizing and evaluating it. It helps teams and individuals think clearly to: Find the root cause of problems faster, make better decisions, manage risks and opportunities, prioritize & plan the resolution of concerns and ask sharper, more incisive questions. The KT tools and techniques learned serve to expand traditional academic learning experiences that focus on the what, to encompass the how: How to take the axioms, theorems, formulas, and principles of traditional academic learning and see how they are actually utilized in a workplace setting – how they are made actionable. Participants completing the workshop receive the KT PSDM certificate. KT rational processes have been in use by many of the world's most important companies for more than 70 years. Kepner Tregoe (KT) Problem-Solving and Decision-Making (PSDM) Workshop is an integral part of your CAP week activities.

## **LIFE (Leadership Initiative For Excellence)**

LIFE is a two- and half-day experiential team building experience. Participants begin first in the classroom to gain an understanding of the way the brain functions, basically an overview of neuroscience applied to leadership. The program then moves into the actual LIFE theater where a variety of activities common to the workplace are performed as a group, with those activities often being conducted in exaggeration. LIFE utilizes cutting-edge biofeedback technology to analyze physiological reactions such as heart rate and heart rate variability and hormonal assessments to gauge cortisol levels in a variety of simulated work and living environments. Participants are able to observe themselves and explore the implications of their behavioral reactions in such everyday situations. Key questions include: What do I find stressful and how does stress affect my performance? What is my relative empathetic response in emotional social situations? How receptive am I to other's social signals? How aware am I of the influence of cognitive biases in my thought processes? How resilient am I to life's day-to-day emotional and cognitive challenges? LIFE experiences will demonstrate how the automatic, reactive, and habitual functioning of the brain ("System 1") is heavily influenced by biases, stereotypes, preconceived notions, deceptive brain messages, and a tendency to jump to conclusions, as well as how mindful self-awareness can activate the brain's more rational, deliberate thinking circuits ("System 2"). LIFE assists participants develop both *mindful awareness* of the physiology shaping their performance by observing themselves ("self-awareness") and observing others ("social awareness"), as well as self-regulatory abilities that moderate unproductive and unhealthy habits. It is a strong bonding experience and provides a unique opportunity for participants to experience psychological safety and understand how they can build it in the workplace to create a more productive, creative, and healthy work environment. To date, some 10,000 participants have gone through LIFE, with the majority of them being executive participants. Upon completion of their LIFE Experience, participants are provided with a LIFE Bio-Report, and/or a LIFE Executive Summary Report, which provides an empirical overview of the experience. The data presented in the Bio-Report provides important information that greatly assists the participant's coaching effort. Successful participants receive the LIFE Certificate.

## **Live 2 Influence**

Finding yourself in a position where you need, but lack, influence is one life's most difficult and frustrating experiences. It can make us feel alone. It can make us feel insignificant. John Maxwell said, there is no leadership without influence; influence is the 'how' of leadership. Understanding influence is to understand how we move and affect people to take action, how do we affect an outcome. Effective influence is more than just public speaking, encompassing an understanding of the neuroscience and psychology behind our behaviors and fusing it with an acute understanding of self-awareness, emotion, storytelling, body language, and more. It is about effective interpersonal communication, both verbal and nonverbal. The skills learned in Live 2 Influence will assist you in all aspects of your communications with others well beyond leadership to include interviews, sales, team meetings, presentations, and much more. As part of the experience, and working in groups of two, participants create a personal video that can be used on their social media platform. Successful participants receive the Live 2 Influence Certificate.

## **Professional Individual Coaching**

The unique CIMBA Personal Development System at the heart of your LEAP experience is fully implemented by its certified personal development coaches who work with you one-on-one. Your LEAP experience includes three 45-minute coaching sessions, intended to assist you in applying and building upon what you learn. The tools, techniques, and other resources available to your coach from within the System facilitate the growth and development of your inner discipline, resilience, objectivity, critical thinking, and decision-making. Working together, your coach and the System share the common objective to build within you a strong foundation in self-awareness, social awareness, and self-regulation. The principal focus of the coaches to work with you to address performance issues about which you are most concerned, and to assist in developing capabilities to best manage them. Your coach will work with you to identify your talents, understand your potential, define your personal development goals, and guide you toward your most preferred future. The coaching process relies heavily on asking you thought provoking and inspirational questions. As you focus on the issues that concern you most, your coach will focus on you. All CIMBA coaches are professionally trained, certified by the International Coaching

Federation (ICF). They are discerning listeners, empathetic, creative, intuitive, curious, and professionally trained in coaching behaviors and competencies. The ultimate goal of coaching within your LEAP experience is to assist you in developing your ability to self-coach. Then, with a deeper understanding of what motivates your action and behavior choices, you will also be better able to effectively guide and support others, encouraging you to build productive, creative, and healthy coaching cultures in all of your life and work domains. It is important to note that coaching should not be confused with therapy, counseling, or mentoring.

## **Mindfulness**

Mindfulness is defined as paying full attention to what you are experiencing in a non-judgmental way. Research that supports the positive impacts of mindfulness training is growing exponentially. Major companies (i.e. Google, Apple, Facebook, and Harvard) are integrating mindfulness practices into their work culture due to its demonstrated effectiveness in improving self-regulation and reducing stress. At CIMBA, we strongly believe in applying the practice of mindfulness and we strive to support the development of this rewarding activity with all of our clients, students, professors, alumni, and staff members.

Mindful breathing, or focused attention on the breath, is the foundational practice of mindfulness and allows you to experience focused attention for a few minutes at a time. With daily practice, you will gradually increase the length of the exercise to 12 minutes of focused attention. Studies have shown that individuals who practice mindfulness can experience personal benefits in as little as a few weeks. The ability to consciously regulate your attention is at the core of well-being and optimal performance. Mindfulness teaches you to respond thoughtfully instead of habitually react to environmental stimuli.

In the context of study abroad or otherwise being out of your comfort zone (ex. attending a class in your non-native language), mindfulness is a tool for making sense of the sensory overload of novel experiences, leading to enhanced self-discovery. CIMBA staff, students, and faculty can engage in daily mindfulness practice and also have the opportunity to experience other types of mindfulness throughout their program. CIMBA students have the opportunity to learn about the science behind mindfulness practice as well as measure, track, and explore their own body's physiological reaction to mindfulness practice in contrast to other activities like speech giving, schoolwork, or exercise. Some of the benefits highlighted by our alumni include increased self-awareness, concentration, energy, calmness, alertness, and rational decision making.

## **Professional Assessments**

Within the CIMBA Personal Development System, assessments are intended to assist you in identifying your strengths, weaknesses, passions, and goals. In addition to the unique LIFE Bio-Report, LEAP participants are also provided access to a wide variety of well-known and respected psychometric assessments (GRIT, Higgins Regulatory Focus, Barratt Impulsiveness Scale, Growth Mindset, Creature of Habits, Resilience, StrengthFinders, etc.). Personal Assessments often reveal that you are far more capable than you think you are. When you dig deeply to understand yourself, you are better able to identify your strengths, turn your weaknesses into assets, and leverage your entire personality to achieve what you want in life, to be the person you want to be. Assessments are taken either through the personalized CIMBA Dashboard or in a paper-based format. Privacy and confidentiality are paramount. Personally identifiable information is available only to the relevant participant and, with their permission, to their personal coach.

From a personal development perspective, assessments assist you in getting an objective and thorough understanding of yourself, what interpersonal competencies you should be reinforcing (strengths), and what competencies might need additional attention (weaknesses), as you bring into focus and develop your personal and career goals. In assisting you in achieving those goals, they serve to guide both you and your personal coach in best directing your valuable personal development energies. From a career development perspective, they provide direction and purpose, assisting you in better understanding what kind of work might best make the use of your strengths, better accentuate your passions, and drive your satisfaction with life. The better you understand what you have to offer and what you want in a career,

the more equipped you are to find your best place in the work world. Without a complete picture of who we are, without depth and meaning in our self-awareness, we can find ourselves hampered by over-confidence, self-doubt, a lack of clarity – or all three.

Increasingly, companies and organizations are using psychometric assessments in hiring decisions, checking to confirm compatibility with a particular position within the company, and in assembling more productive, creative, and innovative teams. In fact, assessments are increasingly being given more weight than resumes and interviews in today's evolving job market, as it moves from its "hard skill" emphasis of the past to its newfound emphasis on "soft skills." The latter is the consequence of the increasing intrusion by robots, computers, and machines into traditional hard skill career fields. In that same light, assessments also assist us as employees – whether leaders or followers -- in better understanding others with whom we work. From both perspectives, we help ourselves by learning more about ourselves, working to develop those essentially human skills of social effectiveness, empathy, and forming relationships.

## Recommended Materials

### Books and Materials:

- Your CIMBA LIFE *Bio-Report* or Summary or Both
- Your CIMBA LIFE *Participant Manual*
- CIMBA *6-Columns Goal Analysis* Booklet
- CIMBA *Goal Appraisal* Booklet
- CIMBA *Quantified-Self Experiment Methodology* Booklet
- CIMBA LIVE 2 *Influence Action Guide Workbook*
- Assessments
- Swart, Chisholm, and Brown. *The Neuroscience of Leadership: Harnessing the Brain Advantage* (2015)

### Readings

Sadun, Raffaella, Joseph Fuller, Stephen Hansen, and P. J. Neal. "The C-Suite Skills That Matter Most." *Harvard Business Review* 100, no. 7-8 (2022): 148-148.

Ringleb, Al H. "Origins of the 6-Columns." *NeuroLeadership Labs White Paper Series*. (2020).

Ringleb, Al H. "CIMBA's Guide to Being Coached." *NeuroLeadership Labs White Paper Series*. (2018).

## Experience Schedule

The CIMBA Personal Development Experience Schedule is provided at the end of this document. It is important to note that **space is limited**. Students enrolling in LEAP will have first priority, with remaining space provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Sign-up sheets are available in the CIMBA main office.

## Certificates Available

Students have the opportunity to earn the following certificates:

Certificate	Prerequisite
Problem-Solving, Decision Making (Kepner-Tregoe)	None
LIFE	None
LIVE 2 Influence	None (LIFE Suggested)

## LEAP Course Grading

For those enrolling in LEAP for course credit, grades will be A, Pass, Fail. It is about your personal development, so your commitment and dedication to the processes will be paramount to the ultimate grade decision. Your commitment will be demonstrated by the punctuality to meetings with your professor and with your coach.

Attendance at the daily Mindfulness sessions is also part of your grade. In addition, your LEAP Course grade will also include a 'final exam' in the form of a self-reflection paper.

### **Final Exam:**

In your self-reflective paper, write about what you are learning and how you intend to apply or are applying what you have learned about yourself in your school and life domains. We would encourage you to reflect on your LIFE and Live 2 Influence experiences, both inside and outside the classroom. It should be no less than two (2), and no more than five (5), double-spaced pages. Please note that we are not looking for a paper that simply recounts what was discussed or presented during the experiences (LIFE and Live 2 Influence). Nor are we looking for you to share the private, personal intimacies you may discuss confidentially with your coach. We are looking for evidence that you are thinking seriously about your personal development and taking meaningful steps toward developing your personal and professional leadership. While we fully expect appropriate sentence structure, grammar, and spelling, greater weight will be placed on the quality of the thought you demonstrate, actions and behaviors you are taking or intend to take, and the level to which your learning experiences are meaningfully and purposefully integrated into those actions and behaviors.

### **Structural Policies**

Virtually everything that concerns the structural mechanics of the LEAP class, including among other things course credit, dropping and adding, and academic misconduct is governed by the Tippie College of Business, University of Iowa. Specific structural policies in that regard include:

**Accommodating Disabilities:** If you have a disability that may require some modification of seating, testing, or any class requirement, please let me know as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Similarly, if you have any emergency medical information that we should be aware of, or if you need special arrangements in the event of the building being evacuated, please let us know as soon as possible.

**Policy on Cheating:** It is our sincere hope that no student in the LEAP class submits work which is not their own. However, it seems prudent to clarify in advance the policy on cheating. If we determine a required assignment was not written solely by the student whose name appears on the assignment, the student will receive a zero (0) for the assignment and may receive an "F" for the class. All incidents of cheating will be reported to the CIMBA Undergraduate Office, and the Associate Dean of the Tippie College of Business. The offending student may be placed on disciplinary probation for the remainder of the semester. In general, the decision of the professor may be appealed to the CIMBA Undergraduate Staff and/or the College of Business Judicial Board, then to the Associate Dean for the Undergraduate Program. The Honor Code for the Tippie College of Business will determine the appropriate process. The Honor Code is located on the University of Iowa website.

**Sexual Harassment:** CIMBA, The Tippie College of Business and the University of Iowa are committed to providing students with an environment free from sexual harassment. If you feel that you are being or have been harassed or you are not sure what constitutes sexual harassment, we encourage you to visit the University of Iowa website:

<https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/>

To seek assistance from the department chairs, Dean's Office, the University Ombudsperson Office, or the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Office.

**FERPA Requirement:** In order to participate in this class, it may be necessary to reveal to other students the names of students who are enrolled in this course and/or workshop. If you do not want your name revealed to other students enrolled in this course, please contact us in writing prior to the first day of the class or of the workshop.

**Privacy and Confidentiality of Assessment Data:** Your Assessment data is strictly private and confidential. Neither your coach nor the instructors and facilitators to this course can view your individual data. ***Unless you request otherwise in writing, your LEAP, LIFE, LIVE 2 Influence, and Coaching personal data will be deleted at the end of the semester.***

**Complaints:** According to the policies regarding academic courses at the University of Iowa, student concerns regarding this course should first be discussed with the faculty and staff teaching the course or workshop. If you cannot resolve the issue, you may contact the Campus Coordinator, Ms. Anna Fiumicetti, 0423-932160, [anna@cimba.it](mailto:anna@cimba.it). If you cannot resolve the issue by speaking with the Campus Coordinator, you may contact the Director of CIMBA, Dr. Cristina Turchet, 0423-932162, [turchet@cimba.it](mailto:turchet@cimba.it).

### **Class Attendance Policy**

Personal development experiences are exactly that: *experiential learning opportunities*. Absent the actual experience, it is simply not possible to embrace the learning opportunity and earn the certificate; the constraints of

time leave us with no alternatives if you fail to attend or complete the experience. We regret that this is the case even in the unfortunate event of an illness.

### Setting Appointments

We sincerely want you to feel free to contact any of the faculty or staff managing these experiences - if you are having trouble, need more detailed instruction, or just want to have a conversation motivated by your curiosity. While our schedules can, unfortunately, be quite unpredictable, if you stop by the office, a formal appointment will be set with you.

## Personal Development Experience Schedule

Date	Day	Time	Experience
January 24	Wednesday	9:00am – 5:30pm	KT Problem Solving and Decision Making
January 25	Thursday	3:35pm-5:20pm	LEAP Intro (Overview and Assessments)
January 26	Friday	9:00am – 5:30pm	DaVinci Challenge
January 31-February 2	Wednesday-Friday	Begins: 1:00pm Thurs Ends: 4:00pm Sat	LIFE (Leadership Initiative For Excellence)
February 7	Wednesday	5:30-7:00pm	LIFE Debrief
February 14	Wednesday	3:35-5:20pm	Intro to Coaching
February 19-23	Monday-Friday	From Sign-Up Sheet (One Hour, 30 Minutes)	Individual Coaching Session I
February 28	Wednesday	3:35-5:20pm	Intro to Live 2 Influence
March 12	Tuesday	5:30-7:00pm	Personal Etiquette Seminar
March 11-15	Monday-Friday	From Sign-Up sheet (One Hour)	Individual Coaching Session II
March 25	Monday	7pm	Live 2 Influence Training starts with Dinner
March 26	Tuesday	2-7pm	Live 2 Influence Training
March 27	Wednesday	5:30-7:30pm	Live 2 Influence Training
March 28	Thursday	2:25-7:30pm	Live 2 Influence Training
April 2-5	Tuesday-Friday	From Sign-Up sheet (45 minutes)	Individual Coaching Session III
April 2	Tuesday	5:30-6:30	LIFE Closure Meeting
April 9.	Tuesday	3:35-5:20pm	LEAP Closure Meeting (L2I Video Due)
TBD	TBD	TBD	KT for Certification
April 10-12	TBD	TBD	LEAP Final (Reflective Paper)