



Learning Outcomes

Collaboration

Core & Specialized Credentials

International Certification Alliance

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LICENSING INFORMATION

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HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

This document outlines the learning outcomes that accredited member organizations must address to offer ICA's Collaboration certification. To achieve the certification, a learner must complete the core credential plus at least two specialized credentials.

Each learning outcome (LO) follows a particular pattern, described below.

O.O Learning Outcome Name

Additional Context, describing why this Learning Outcome is important or what it is intended to impart.

The learning outcome's purpose further describes what is expected to be imparted to the learner (e.g., a key point, framework, model, approach, technique, or skill).

CORE CREDENTIAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Collaboration Core

Effective collaboration does not happen automatically when people are placed on the same team. It requires shared understanding of the work, genuine interdependence, mutual accountability, and deliberate effort to sustain. This course is for professionals at any level who want to understand what collaboration actually requires, not just as a value, but as a practice, and develop the ability to build and sustain it in the teams and relationships they are part of.

1. Defining Collaboration

1.1 Collaboration, Cooperation, and Coordination

Teams routinely describe working together as collaboration when what is actually happening is cooperation or coordination. Each mode requires a different level of interdependence and shared ownership, and treating them as the same leads to mismatched expectations about effort, commitment, and accountability.

Build the ability to distinguish collaboration from cooperation and coordination, and to recognize which mode a given situation actually calls for. Calling all three "collaboration" sets people up for friction later, when one person assumed full shared ownership and the other assumed they were just helping out on the side.

1.2 Conditions Impacting Collaboration

Collaboration can fail even when people are willing because the conditions for it are absent: unclear interdependence, no shared definition of success, or structures that reward individual contribution over joint outcomes.

Build the ability to identify the conditions that make genuine collaboration possible and recognize when those conditions are missing. Learners should be able to look at a struggling collaboration and diagnose whether the barrier is really about the people or about a structural condition that would sabotage even a highly motivated team.

1.3 Collaboration at Different Levels

The needs and challenges of collaboration change fundamentally as more people and teams get involved. Recognizing those shifts is essential to knowing what will actually work.

Define multiple levels of collaboration such as between individuals, within a team, across multiple teams, and cross-boundary. Highlight the unique challenges and complexity of collaborating at each level. Cover how to recognize each level and adjust the approach to collaboration accordingly.

2. Creating the Conditions for Collaboration

2.1 Shared Understanding and Purpose

Shared purpose answers why the team exists and why this work matters. Shared understanding answers what the team is actually doing, how it happens, who does what, and what success looks like.

Build learners' ability to recognize that shared purpose and shared understanding of the work are interconnected practices. Cover practices that build both shared understanding and purpose such as ongoing dialogue about why the work matters and what the work entails, connecting individual tasks to larger goals and ensuring clarity on roles and flow, revisiting both purpose and clarity when priorities or team composition shift. Show examples where teams lacked alignment on purpose, clarity on work, or both and the consequences.

2.2 Understanding Team Interdependence

Interdependence means more than needing each other's outputs. It means that what one person does shapes what is possible for another. When people do not acknowledge their interdependencies, coordination happens too late and the cost of misalignment falls unevenly.

Build the ability to recognize and work with genuine interdependence, distinguishing it from parallel work that happens to be related. Sharpen learners' sense of interdependence past the shallow version ("I need your output by Friday") toward the deeper version (where one person's design choice quietly constrains what another can even attempt). Left unacknowledged, this kind of interdependence surfaces late, usually resulting in rework and delays.

2.3 Team Accountability

Individual accountability works when people do isolated work. In collaborative teams, accountability must shift to the whole. We succeed or fail together.

Build the ability to recognize how accountability shifts in collaborative teams from individual responsibility to shared responsibility for collective outcomes. Teach the distinction between individual accountability ("I did my job.") and team accountability ("We achieved our goal together, and we're answerable to each other for that.") Cover the conditions that enable mutual accountability such as psychological safety, clear shared goals, transparency, and regular check-ins. Introduce the conditions that challenge team accountability such as rewarding individual performance, blame culture, unclear goals, silos, or leaders who undermine it.

4. Sustaining Collaboration Over Time

4.1 Collaborative Health

Collaboration can feel productive on the relationship side while producing little of real value, or the reverse. Changing membership, shifting priorities, and accumulated friction can erode collaborative health in ways that are not always visible until a breakdown occurs.

Build the ability to assess whether collaboration is healthy using both relational and outcome-based indicators, not just whether things feel smooth. Help learners differentiate between a team that gets along well and a team that's actually producing something worth the effort.

4.2 Fostering Collaboration

Collaboration is built through deliberate intention, not assumed. It is important to create collaborative conditions and reinforce them regularly through small, repeated practices are what make collaboration stick.

Develop learners' ability to design foster collaborative sessions that build shared understanding, accountability, inclusion, and collaborative capacity. Introduce techniques for collaboration such as conversations that surface shared purpose, making interdependence visible, creating norms around mutual accountability, or checking in on how the team is working together. Emphasize that fostering collaboration is ongoing work woven into regular team rhythms.

SPECIALIZED CREDENTIAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Cross-Boundary Collaboration

Collaboration becomes structurally harder when the people involved come from different functions or parts of the organization. They may have different mandates, definitions of success, incentives, and no shared authority to resolve tensions that arise.

1.1 Challenges of Cross-Boundary Collaboration

Cross-boundary collaboration faces structural challenges that are predictable and patterned. Understanding these structural challenges, rather than attributing them to personality or lack of effort, is essential for recognizing what cross-boundary collaboration actually requires.

Build an understanding of the specific structural demands that cross-boundary collaboration places on people such as no shared manager to resolve disputes, incentives pulling both sides away from the same outcome, competing priorities, and little to no informal hallway context and connections.

2.1 Cross-Boundary Alignment

Cross-boundary collaboration requires deliberate upfront work to build shared understanding: translating how each side defines success and priorities, aligning stakeholders across the boundary, and establishing explicit agreements about what the collaboration aims to accomplish and how you'll work together.

Build learners' ability to construct working agreements that address the structural demands of cross-boundary collaboration. Teach that effective cross-boundary working agreements surface and address items such as coordinating for cross-boundary interdependence, norms for competing priorities, addressing different risk tolerances, identifying cross-boundary communication channels and key stakeholders, balancing cross-boundary power dynamics, and how each party actually sees the purpose.

3.1 Joint Ownership in Cross-Boundary Collaboration

Cross-boundary work can produce a set of separate contributions that were never actually integrated, leaving no one with real ownership of the whole. When this happens, results are harder to sustain or adapt because the commitment was to a task, not a shared outcome.

Build the ability to distinguish genuine joint ownership from distributed task completion, and to assess what shaped the result in a cross-boundary effort. Help learners with the ability to tell the difference between a set of parallel deliverables and genuine joint ownership, and identify what in a given effort actually pushed toward one outcome or the other.

4.1 Sustaining Cross-Boundary Collaboration

Cross-boundary collaboration is not a state that, once achieved, maintains itself. Organizational priorities shift, team membership changes, and the pressures that pull teams back toward siloed working are constant.

Build learners' capacity to evaluate the health of an ongoing cross-boundary collaboration using structural and relational criteria, distinguishing surface-level functioning from the deeper conditions that determine sustainability. Consider factors such as measures of shared outcomes, coordination effectiveness, and organizational value created.

Inclusion & Belonging

Inclusion and Belonging is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who want to build working environments where every person can contribute fully, be seen accurately, and experience genuine belonging, not as a benefit extended by those with privilege, but as a structural and cultural condition that organizations create deliberately.

1.1 What Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Mean

Diversity, inclusion, and belonging get used interchangeably, but having a diverse team doesn't guarantee anyone actually feels able to contribute.

Build an understanding of how diversity, inclusion, and belonging differ, and what actually makes belonging possible. For example, a team can be demographically diverse on paper but that doesn't mean all of the various viewpoints and experience is being heard and included. But even when that is desired, full benefits depend on psychological safety, the sense that it's safe to speak up and take an interpersonal risk.

2.1 Everyday Exclusion and Bias

Everyday exclusion and bias erodes collaboration quietly, the cost shows up as disengagement and withheld ideas long before it shows up as an open conflict.

Build the ability to notice both obvious and easy-to-miss patterns of exclusion, including where bias plays a role. Exclusion usually shows up as small, repeated patterns such as who gets credit, whose voice gets airtime, or who does the invisible labor. Bias is only part of what drives it. Such as when the same person's idea gets credited to whoever restates it, or the same few people always ending up with the thankless coordination work nobody notices. Bias can drive some of these patterns, but not all of them; some come from habit, convenience, or structural defaults that have nothing to do with anyone's conscious or unconscious attitudes.

3.1 Inclusion Practices and Personal Commitment

Being aware that exclusion happens doesn't change anything on its own. It takes specific behaviors, including knowing how to respond when exclusion happens in front of you.

Build the ability to turn awareness of exclusion into practical action, both planned and in the moment. Most people can identify exclusion after the fact, but far fewer have a ready response for the moment someone gets talked over in a meeting. Introduce inclusion practices, personal commitments, and in the moment responses such as rotating who speaks first, checking in with quieter members before a decision is finalized, pausing before repeating an idea already voiced by someone else, or naming when exclusion is happening directly in the moment.

4.1 Inclusion Conditions and Lived Experience

An organization can believe its culture is inclusive while the people most at risk of exclusion experience something different. Good intent doesn't close that gap on its own.

Build the ability to assess inclusion by comparing what an organization says it values against what people actually experience. Help learners be able to diagnose where stated values and lived experience diverge and recommend both a structural change, such as revising how promotion decisions or credit for ideas get allocated, and a behavioral change, such as how meetings are run so quieter voices are actively drawn out rather than left to compete for airtime.

Remote & Hybrid Collaboration

Remote and Hybrid Collaboration is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who collaborate with colleagues they rarely or never share physical space with.

1.1 Differences in Remote and Hybrid Collaboration

Colleagues in the same location pick up an enormous amount without ever scheduling a meeting for it and none of that transfers automatically when a team moves to remote or hybrid work. Teams often chalk up the resulting friction to individual effort or attitude, when the real cause is structural. Proximity itself was quietly doing work that now has to be done deliberately, or not at all.

Build an understanding of what physical proximity actually contributes to collaboration, and what's lost when it's removed. For example, in-person work provides informal updates and quick clarification that quietly disappear, or become unevenly distributed, once a team goes remote or hybrid. This is a structural change, not a matter of individual effort.

2.1 Trust and Shared Understanding at a Distance

Remote and hybrid teams lose many of the informal interactions that normally build trust, and those mechanisms don't get replaced automatically.

Build the ability to build trust and shared understanding intentionally when a team can't rely on informal, in-person contact. For example, practices like opening a meeting with unstructured personal check-in time, or narrating context out loud that would otherwise be picked up incidentally in person, can rebuild some of what distance removes.

3.1 Distributed and Asynchronous Collaboration Design

Trying to replicate in-person work through more meetings tends to disadvantage people across time zones and schedules, rather than solving the collaboration challenge.

Build the ability to design collaboration practices that fit distributed and asynchronous work, rather than defaulting to more meetings. Help learners be able to design an approach that deliberately splits work between synchronous elements, such as a live discussion reserved for genuine debate, and asynchronous elements, such as a shared document with a comment deadline for input that doesn't require everyone online at once. While also building in a specific mechanism to maintain equitable participation, such as rotating meeting times across time zones or requiring async input be reviewed before a decision is finalized.

4.1 Health of Remote and Hybrid Collaboration

A remote or hybrid team can look productive on paper while quietly excluding some participants from information, influence, or a sense of belonging.

Build the ability to assess remote and hybrid collaboration health by criteria beyond whether the tasks got done. Help learners examine specific factors driving inequitable participation in a given scenario, such as who gets called on first in a hybrid meeting or whose messages get responses versus left unread.

Customer Success & Relationship Management

Customer Success & Relationship Management is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who manage or influence ongoing customer relationships after an initial purchase, commitment, or onboarding. The discipline is broader than keeping customers satisfied or preventing churn: it is about helping customers realize meaningful value over time, understanding the health of the relationship, coordinating the people and actions needed for success, and earning retention, advocacy, or appropriate growth through outcomes achieved. The credential applies beyond SaaS to recurring, repeat, account-based, and long-term client relationships.

1.1 Customer Success and Value Realization

Winning a customer or completing onboarding does not mean the customer has realized value. Customers remain successful when they achieve the outcomes they expected, adopt what is useful, and can see the value being created over time.

Build learners' understanding of Customer Success as a proactive discipline focused on customer outcomes and value realization across the relationship lifecycle. Distinguish activity, adoption, satisfaction, and realized value, and show how customer outcomes connect to retention, advocacy, and sustainable business value.

2.1 Customer Health, Risk, and Opportunity Signals

Customers do not always state that value is declining, trust is weakening, adoption is stalled, or a new opportunity is emerging. Product or service usage, support history, engagement, sentiment, stakeholder behavior, progress toward outcomes, and relationship changes can provide earlier signals—but no single score tells the whole story.

Develop learners' ability to interpret multiple signals to form a grounded view of customer and relationship health. Explore leading and lagging signals, risks and opportunities, stakeholder and sentiment changes, adoption and outcome progress, and the limits of relying on a single health score or automated prediction. Distinction: CX Metrics & ROI teaches how to select and interpret measurement systems; this LO focuses on using available signals to decide where Customer Success attention is needed.

3.1 Success Planning and Stakeholder Alignment

Long-term customer relationships involve multiple goals, stakeholders, milestones, and moments where expectations can drift. Reactive check-ins or generic account plans can maintain activity without creating progress or strengthening the partnership.

Develop learners' ability to create a focused success approach around shared customer outcomes. Explore success plans, stakeholder mapping and alignment, onboarding and adoption milestones, proactive engagement, expectation management, executive or sponsor alignment where appropriate, and clear ownership of next actions. Emphasize adapting the engagement model to the relationship rather than applying the same high-touch approach to every customer.

4.1 Retention, Renewal and Responsible Growth

Renewal or expansion is strongest when it follows demonstrated customer value and trust, not when it is treated as a last-minute commercial event. Relationships also need periodic reassessment because customer goals, stakeholders, usage, and business conditions change over time.

Develop learners' ability to evaluate whether the relationship is producing customer value and determine the appropriate next move. Explore value reinforcement before renewal, risk response, advocacy, appropriate expansion or cross-sell when it advances customer outcomes, and adjusting the success approach when needs change. Use new signals and AI-assisted insight to adapt earlier, while preserving human judgment and avoiding growth that is misaligned with customer value. Moves could include retain, recover, deepen, expand, or adapt.

Team Coaching

Team Coaching is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who want to coach an intact team as a collective client rather than coach individual team members separately. Learners develop the ability to recognize what appropriately belongs within team coaching, establish a shared coaching agreement, maintain a stance that serves the team as a whole, and facilitate interventions that help the team notice and work with its own patterns, relationships, and ways of working. Through practice and reflection, learners strengthen their ability to support collective ownership and capability and evaluate whether coaching is contributing to meaningful behavioral and relational change within the team.

1.1 Team Coaching as a Practice

Team coaching works with an intact team as the client rather than coaching individual members separately. The focus is on how the team thinks, interacts, learns, and works toward shared outcomes.

Develop learners' understanding of team coaching as a distinct practice focused on the team as a collective client. Build learners' ability to distinguish team coaching from individual coaching, facilitation, team building, and systems coaching; keep attention on patterns and outcomes that belong to the intact team; and recognize when a team need may be better addressed through another approach.

2.1 Contracting and Stance with a Team

Team coaching requires agreement about the team's purpose for coaching, roles, participation, confidentiality, sponsor expectations, and how the coach will work with the team as a whole.

Develop learners' ability to establish a clear coaching agreement with an intact team and maintain a stance that serves the team as a whole. Build learners' capacity to clarify the purpose of coaching, roles and expectations, confidentiality boundaries, sponsor expectations, and how progress will be understood. Reinforce balanced attention across team members and awareness of power and participation dynamics, while avoiding alignment with the leader, a subgroup, or an individual agenda.

3.1 Team Coaching Interventions

Team coaching interventions help an intact team notice and work with its own patterns rather than relying on the coach to diagnose its problems or provide the solutions.

Develop learners' ability to facilitate interventions that help a team observe how it communicates, makes decisions, handles disagreement, shares responsibility, and works toward shared outcomes. Build learners' capacity to respond to what is emerging in the team, create space for multiple perspectives, notice relevant power and participation dynamics, and strengthen the team's ability to recognize and work with its own patterns without turning the coach into the expert or fixer.

4.1 Team Coaching Outcomes

Team coaching should be evaluated through changes in how the team works together, not simply through completed coaching activity or individual member satisfaction.

Develop learners' ability to evaluate whether coaching is contributing to greater collective capability within the team. Build learners' capacity to recognize observable shifts in communication, decision-making, disagreement, accountability, shared ownership, learning, or progress toward team outcomes, and distinguish those changes from activities such as attendance or completed sessions.

EQ in Remote and Hybrid Environments

EQ in Remote & Hybrid Environments is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who want to apply emotional intelligence when distance and technology reduce context or create uneven experiences of connection and inclusion. Learners develop the ability to recognize the emotional demands of distributed work, interpret digital signals without treating assumptions as fact, choose communication modes based on the emotional and relational needs of the situation, and use emotionally intelligent practices to strengthen trust, inclusion, and connection across distance.

1.1 Emotional Demands of Remote and Hybrid Work

Remote and hybrid work can reduce many of the cues and informal interactions people use to understand one another. Digital fatigue, asynchronous work, ambiguity, and blurred boundaries can also create distinctive emotional pressures.

Develop learners' understanding of how distributed work changes the emotional demands of professional relationships. Consider reduced social cues, digital fatigue, asynchronous communication, isolation, blurred boundaries, and uneven experiences between remote and in-person colleagues, and recognize how these conditions can affect emotion, interpretation, behavior, and connection.

2.1 Emotional Signals in Digital Communication

Digital communication can reduce, alter, or remove cues such as tone, body language, facial expression, timing, and physical context. What is missing can be as important as what appears to be present.

Develop learners' ability to interpret emotional information in digital communication without treating inference as fact. Examine available cues such as wording, response patterns, silence, tone, pace, or video behavior; recognize important information that is missing or obscured; distinguish observation from interpretation; and use curiosity or checking when greater understanding is needed.

3.1 Communication Mode and Emotional Fit

The communication channel shapes what emotional information is available and how easily misunderstandings can be repaired. A convenient mode is not always the right mode for the sensitivity, ambiguity, or relational importance of the conversation.

Develop learners' ability to choose and shift communication modes based on the emotional and relational needs of the situation rather than habit or convenience alone. Consider sensitivity, complexity, ambiguity, urgency, need for dialogue, available cues, accessibility, relationship context, and the cost of misunderstanding when deciding between asynchronous messaging, voice, video, or in-person communication. Reinforce that shifting communication modes can be an EQ choice when the current mode is no longer serving understanding.

4.1 Trust and Connection Across Distance

Trust and connection can weaken when informal contact, shared context, and physical presence are reduced. Distributed relationships therefore require more deliberate relational attention.

Develop learners' ability to use emotionally intelligent behavior to strengthen trust and connection across distance. Create clarity and predictability, make space for informal and relational connection, notice signs of isolation or disengagement without over-interpreting them, respond to emotional cues with appropriate curiosity rather than assumption, and adapt communication practices so remote or less-visible colleagues are not unintentionally excluded.

EQ Across Culture and Identity

EQ Across Culture & Identity is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who want to apply emotional intelligence effectively across differences in culture, identity, context, and power. Learners develop the ability to recognize that emotional norms are not universal, consider how power and positionality shape emotional experience and expression, engage across differences with cultural humility rather than assumption, and use emotionally inclusive practices that make room for different ways of communicating and participating.

1.1 Culture, Identity, and Emotional Expression

Emotional expression and interpretation are shaped by culture, identity, individual experience, and professional context. Behaviors considered appropriate or meaningful in one setting may be understood differently in another.

Develop learners' understanding that emotional norms are contextual rather than universal. Examine how cultural background, identity, professional norms, organizational context, and individual experience can shape how emotion is expressed, interpreted, and responded to. Reinforce that cultural patterns can inform curiosity but should not be used to predict an individual's behavior.

2.1 Power, Positionality, and Emotional Experience

Power and positionality affect which emotions feel safe to express, whose behavior is viewed as acceptable, and what consequences may follow from speaking or responding honestly.

Develop learners' ability to account for power and positionality when interpreting emotional experience across differences. Consider how formal authority, social identity, status, belonging, representation, and dependence can influence what people express or withhold; recognize additional emotional work such as monitoring behavior, adapting expression, or navigating stereotypes; and examine how their own position shapes what they notice, assume, or interpret.

3.1 Cultural Humility

Cultural humility means recognizing the limits of one's own perspective and remaining open to learning from another person's experience rather than assuming expertise about them.

Develop learners' ability to engage across cultural and identity differences with curiosity, openness, and self-awareness. Examine how to notice and suspend assumptions, ask rather than infer, remain willing to revise their interpretation, and adapt their response based on what they learn. Reinforce that cultural humility is an ongoing stance rather than mastery of another person's culture or identity.

4.1 Emotionally Inclusive Practices

Emotional inclusion is shaped by repeated interpersonal practices that allow people to express concerns, perspectives, and emotions without being required to conform to one preferred communication or emotional style.

Develop learners' ability to translate awareness of culture, identity, and power into everyday EQ practices. Notice whose emotional expression is treated as normal or professional, adapt expectations where appropriate, make room for different ways of communicating and participating, respond constructively when assumptions or misinterpretations surface, and reduce unnecessary emotional burden on people who differ from dominant norms.

Peer and Reverse Mentoring

Peer and Reverse Mentoring is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who want to create mentoring relationships in which learning and value flow in more than one direction. Learners explore the distinct dynamics of peer and reverse mentoring, including how differences in experience, role, identity, and organizational power can shape participation and learning. They develop judgment about whether value, responsibility, and learning are genuinely shared; establish clear agreements that support voluntary participation, confidentiality, and psychological safety; and practice peer and reverse mentoring in ways that preserve mutual ownership and agency.

1.1 Peer and Reverse Mentoring

Developmental value does not have to flow from a more senior person to a more junior one. Peer and reverse mentoring can create mutual learning across differences in experience, role, generation, identity, or perspective. While both can be reciprocal, reverse mentoring may involve more pronounced differences in organizational power.

Develop learners' understanding of peer and reverse mentoring as distinct approaches that can create reciprocal development rather than simply reversing traditional advice-giving. Build learners' capacity to recognize how both participants can contribute knowledge, perspective, challenge, access, and learning; distinguish peer mentoring from reverse mentoring and both from traditional hierarchical mentoring; and preserve shared responsibility for the relationship without assuming that participants bring the same kind of power or experience.

2.1 Mutual Value and Shared Responsibility

Reverse mentoring can become tokenizing or extractive when one participant is expected to represent a group, educate a more powerful colleague, or carry most of the learning burden without meaningful development in return.

Develop learners' ability to assess whether peer and reverse mentoring relationships create meaningful development for both participants without assuming equal or identical contributions. Build learners' capacity to examine what each participant hopes to learn or contribute; who is expected to do the emotional, educational, or relational work; whether one person is being treated as a representative of an identity or group; and whether the relationship supports mutual learning without making one person responsible for another's awareness or development.

3.1 Psychological Safety and Confidentiality

Peer and reverse mentoring can involve unusual or uneven power dynamics, particularly when a reverse mentor has less organizational power than the person they are mentoring. Clear expectations about purpose, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and boundaries help both participants contribute honestly and make informed choices about the relationship.

Develop learners' ability to establish peer and reverse mentoring relationships that support candor, psychological safety, and shared ownership. Build learners' capacity to clarify purpose, mutual expectations, confidentiality and its limits, voluntary participation, how differences in organizational power will be handled, what each person is and is not responsible for teaching, and how either participant can raise concerns, change the relationship, or step away without undue consequence.

4. Peer and Reverse Mentoring in Practice

Effective peer and reverse mentoring require more than good intentions. Participants need to listen and inquire across differences, contribute perspective without dominating the exchange, and notice how power affects who speaks, challenges, teaches, or defers.

Develop learners' ability to engage effectively in peer and reverse mentoring conversations that create mutual learning and preserve agency. Build learners' capacity to listen and inquire across differences, contribute relevant perspectives without dominating the exchange, notice how power affects participation, share responsibility for learning, and preserve each participant's ability to challenge assumptions, set boundaries, and choose what they take from the conversation.

Team Development

Team Development is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who want to support teams in becoming more capable and effective over time. Learners examine how a team's history, membership, roles, norms, relationships, trust, leadership, and changing conditions shape its development, including how those supporting or leading a team can influence its dynamics. Learners analyze team patterns without jumping too quickly to labels; design development responses that fit the team's current needs and build its own capability; and use behavioral, relational, and performance evidence to assess development over time.

1.1 Team Development Over Time

Teams develop patterns, norms, relationships, and ways of working over time. Their development is rarely linear, and changes in purpose, membership, leadership, or context can create new needs.

Develop learners' understanding of team development as an evolving process rather than a fixed sequence of stages. Build learners' capacity to consider how a team's history, purpose, membership, roles, norms, relationships, trust, workload, leadership, and changing conditions shape its development. Use stage or lifecycle models as optional lenses for sense-making rather than universal predictions of how every team should progress.

2.1 Team Dynamics, Trust, and Psychological Safety

Team dynamics become visible through patterns of participation, decision-making, disagreement, accountability, trust, and safety. Individual moments can be misleading when interpreted without enough context, and those leading or supporting a team may themselves influence the patterns they observe.

Develop learners' ability to observe patterns that influence how effectively a team works together without over-interpreting limited evidence. Build learners' capacity to examine participation, voice, trust, disagreement, decision-making, accountability, inclusion, and psychological safety; distinguish repeated patterns from isolated incidents; consider how context and power affect what team members are willing and able to contribute; and recognize how those leading or supporting the team may reinforce or disrupt these patterns.

3.1 Team Development Priorities and Responses

Teams do not improve through generic development activities. Different patterns and conditions call for different kinds of support, and addressing the visible symptom may leave the underlying development need unchanged.

Develop learners' ability to identify and prioritize team development needs and choose responses appropriate to the team's context. Build learners' capacity to distinguish underlying development needs from visible symptoms; consider responses such as role clarity, working agreements, trust-building, decision practices, conflict norms, accountability, relationship repair, and learning routines; and take appropriate action within their role and capability to strengthen team capability and shared ownership.

4.1 Team Health and Development Progress

Team health is better understood through patterns of behavior and relationships over time than through isolated events, activity levels, or team-member satisfaction alone.

Develop learners' ability to evaluate team health and development using multiple forms of evidence. Build learners' capacity to examine behavioral, relational, and performance indicators such as participation, trust, conflict quality, decision effectiveness, accountability, adaptability, shared ownership, team capability, and progress toward outcomes; identify patterns of improvement, stagnation, or regression when sufficient evidence is available; and avoid drawing conclusions from a single data point or measure.

Co-Training

Co-Training is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who deliver learning alongside another person and want the partnership to strengthen rather than complicate the learner experience. Learners explore different ways to share training responsibility, choose an approach that fits the learning experience and facilitator partnership, and practice coordinating roles, transitions, signals, support, and real-time adjustments with a partner. Learners also evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership using evidence from both the learner and trainer experience to improve future shared delivery.

1.1 Co-Training Roles and Models

Two trainers can share responsibility in different ways, from one person leading while the other supports to both trainers actively sharing delivery, practice, observation, and learner support. Without a shared understanding of how responsibilities will be divided, partners often default to an unplanned arrangement that can create duplication, gaps, competition, or confusion for learners.

Develop learners' understanding of the different ways trainers can share responsibility for a learning experience. Explore how lead-and-support, divided responsibility, parallel or small-group training, shared real-time delivery, and other arrangements create different demands on the partnership and learner experience. Reinforce that effective co-training begins with an intentional agreement about how the partnership will work rather than two facilitators independently deciding what each will do.

2.1 Fit of Co-Training Approaches

No single co-training arrangement works equally well for every learning experience or facilitator partnership. Content, learner needs, activity structure, audience size, facilitator expertise, and experience working together can all influence which arrangement will support learning most effectively.

Develop learners' ability to choose a co-training approach based on what the learning experience and partnership require rather than habit, status, or personal preference. Consider the learning purpose, content, audience, activity structure, trainer expertise, experience working together, and the level of coordination different approaches require. Build judgment about when greater role separation provides clarity and when more integrated training adds value.

3.1 Co-Training Coordination Techniques

Even with a clear understanding of roles, a well-matched co-training arrangement can fall apart in execution. If the two trainers haven't discussed and practiced how to hand off, signal, and support each other moment to moment, it causes disruption for the learner's experience.

Develop learners' practical toolkit of in-the-moment coordination techniques that make co-training feel seamless to learners rather than like two separate people taking turns. For example, one trainer might quietly prepare the next activity's materials while the other is actively teaching, a small physical cue like stepping slightly forward can signal "I want to add something" without interrupting, and using collective language like "we" rather than "I" reinforces a unified front rather than two competing voices. Learners should be able to apply techniques like these so the partnership functions smoothly without requiring constant verbal negotiation in front of the group.

4.1 Co-Training Partnership Effectiveness

A co-trained session can appear smooth while responsibilities feel unclear or unbalanced between trainers, and a partnership that feels comfortable to the trainers can still create duplication, mixed messages, or uneven support for learners. Effective reflection therefore needs evidence from both the learner experience and the trainers' experience working together.

Develop learners' ability to evaluate and strengthen a co-training partnership using evidence rather than personal comfort or chemistry alone. Explore role clarity, transitions, balance of contribution, consistency of messages, responsiveness to learners, real-time coordination, and feedback from both learners and partners. Use reflection to identify what should be sustained, changed, or agreed differently before the next shared session.

Team and Network Design

Team and Network Design is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who want to design how teams collaborate across formal boundaries in hybrid, distributed, product, platform, and ecosystem-based organizations. Formal structure defines primary accountability, but complex work is increasingly delivered through cross-functional teams, communities, informal networks, and external partners. The course develops the ability to diagnose real collaboration patterns, select proportionate lateral mechanisms, and protect network health without creating unnecessary meetings or matrix complexity.

1.1 Formal Structure and Cross-Boundary Coordination

Organizations have formal structure but lack the lateral connections that enable work across organizational boundaries.

Build learners' understanding that formal structure (reporting lines, departments, hierarchies) handles routine work within clear boundaries. Complex work often crosses functions, locations, and organizational boundaries. This cross-boundary work requires coordination across those boundaries and formal structure doesn't inherently create those connections. Introduce lateral mechanisms such as peer-to-peer coordination, cross-functional teams with shared accountability, shared metrics that span boundaries, information systems that make data visible across silos, communities of practice that connect people doing similar work across boundaries, liaison roles that own the boundary, and regular cross-boundary forums.

2.1 Organizational Networks and Collaboration Flow

Important work often depends on informal connectors, specialist communities, and boundary-spanning relationships. These networks can improve flow but may also create overload, exclusion, bottlenecks, or resilience risks.

Build learners' ability to see how work actually flows through the organization versus the formal org chart that shows structure. Teach that collaboration networks show connections such as who talks to whom regularly, where information flows across boundaries, who acts as a bridge between silos, where critical decisions require multiple people's input, or who's a bottleneck because everyone depends on them. Build learners' ability to make informal collaboration networks visible using organizational network analysis and assess where they support or constrain performance.

3.1 Lateral Coordination Mechanisms

Different coordination problems require different mechanisms. Good organizational design uses the minimal coordination mechanism needed to make work flow.

Build learners' understanding that coordination mechanisms are tools and heavier mechanisms (dedicated teams, formal governance) cost more in time, resources, and complexity. The goal is solving the coordination problem with the lightest mechanism that actually works, not defaulting to heavy structures. Introduce a spectrum of coordination mechanisms such as product or mission teams, platforms, liaison roles, integrator roles, communities of practice, and shared forums.

4.1 Network Health, Flow, and Resilience

Collaboration networks can weaken as organizations grow or change. Overloaded connectors, excessive meetings, isolated teams, poor knowledge flow, or dependence on a few individuals can reduce both performance and inclusion.

Build learners' ability to assess network health and determine where collaboration mechanisms need reinforcement, simplification, or redesign. Cover the importance of indicators (such as flow, dependency, meeting, collaboration, inclusion, or resilience indicators) to show when the network health degrades.

Group Communication

Group Communication is a 2–4 hours Specialized Credential that builds on the foundations introduced in the Communication Core Credential. This course is for practitioners who regularly lead, participate in, or design group interactions, meetings, workshops, team discussions, and collaborative decision-making sessions.

1.1 Why Group Communication Is Different

Group settings introduce dynamics that do not exist in one-to-one communication.

Develop learners' ability to build an understanding of what makes group communication genuinely different from one-to-one conversation. Talking in a group adds pressures that may be amplified compared to one-to-one such as competing voices, uneven airtime, and the challenge of building understanding that the whole group actually shares,

2.1 Adapting Communication

A technique that works for a 5-person huddle can fall apart in a 30-person room, and a discussion that flows easily in person can lose nuance or momentum online. Group communication needs different handling as scale and format change.

Develop learners' ability to adjust communication approach based on group size, setting and energy (small vs. large, in-person vs. remote/hybrid). Cover ways to make shifts based on a group's collective energy and engagement.

3.1 Synthesis and Shared Meaning

A group can generate a lot of ideas and still leave the room without a shared sense of where it landed.

Develop learners' ability to pull together what a group has said into a clear picture the group can check and confirm. More talking doesn't automatically produce agreement.

4.1 Facilitating Group Dynamics

Without intentional facilitation, groups converge quickly on false agreement, missing perspectives and making weaker decisions. Prepared facilitation surfaces real thinking and builds decisions people actually own.

Cover the challenges that exist in group communication such as group think, lack of engagement, or dominant participation. Introduce techniques to facilitate group conversation in response to these dynamics in a psychologically safe way.

Rebuilding Trust

Trust erodes for many reasons—broken commitments, misalignment, unmet expectations, or simple disconnection. Once lost, the relational residue, guardedness, and unspoken resentment can quietly undermine collaboration for months or years. This 2–4 hour Specialized Credential focuses on what happens after trust breaks down: how it fractures, what genuine repair requires, and how to re-establish the conditions for productive working relationships.

1.1 How Trust Breaks Down

Trust is rarely broken in a single moment. It erodes through repeated experiences that accumulate into a sense of unsafety.

Establish an understanding of trust as a dynamic and fragile relational resource, the experiences that damage trust and why time alone does not restore it.

2.1 Genuine Repair and Surface Resolution

Attempts to repair trust often fail when they address the immediate incident but not the broader sense of unreliability, harm, or reduced safety.

Develop learners' ability to distinguish genuine repair (addressing the relationship rupture) from surface resolution (addressing the incident) and recognize what conditions are still missing. Introduce practices to support relational repair such as acknowledgment, accountability, and renewed agreements.

3.1 Accountability and Acknowledgment in Repair

Accountability can support repair when it clearly acknowledges impact and responsibility without becoming blame or a performative apology.

Build learners' ability to support repair through acknowledgment, accountability, renewed agreements, and other practices that restore working relationships. Cover the importance of addressing the impact on the other party, taking clear responsibility, and offering a concrete forward commitment.

4.1 Sustained Trust Building

Rebuilding trust requires follow-through or risk falling back into old patterns causing loss of trust again.

Develop learners' ability to assess whether a trust-rebuilding effort has created the conditions for sustained repair, using criteria such as consistent behavior, agreements being honored, or moments where old patterns resurface. Help learners recognize that continuing to evaluate progress and adapting is an act of trust building.

Conflict Across Difference

Standard conflict frameworks were largely developed from a single cultural vantage point and often assume a level playing field that does not exist in most organizations. When conflict crosses lines of identity, culture, or structural power, the dynamics change in ways that generic approaches do not account for. This 2–4 hour Specialized Credential equips practitioners to recognize and work constructively with those differences.

1.1 Culture, Identity, and Conflict Experience

Conflict is not a universal experience. Culture and social identity can shape how people experience conflict.

Build learners' understanding of how culture and identity shape conflict. Some examples of this context are how people perceive threat, express disagreement or concerns, interpret silence, and understand resolution. Help learners recognize how using a single conflict approach regardless of context risks misreading behavior, causing harm, and producing outcomes that feel fair to some parties and unjust to others.

2.1 Power Imbalance in Conflict

When parties have unequal organizational, social, or structural power, they may not have the same choices or risks in a conflict.

Teach learners to recognize power imbalances based on social identity, organizational role, or structural position and how they fundamentally change each party's perception of threat, available options, and how behavior is interpreted. Emphasize that neutral conflict approaches fail when power is unequal; direct engagement may be unsafe or inappropriate for the person with less power. Introduce practical alternatives such as documentation, seeking support, building safer conditions before engaging, or escalating when necessary.

3.1 Adapting Conflict Practice Across Difference

Awareness of difference is necessary but not sufficient. Awareness must lead to adapted practices.

Develop learners' ability to design conflict engagement approaches that are deliberately adapted to the identity, cultural, and power context of a specific situation rather than applying a standard framework uniformly. Examples of engagement approaches are adjusting how they listen, how they frame issues, how they create safety, and how they define a good outcome in ways that are genuinely responsive to the people in the room rather than performatively inclusive. Reinforce that approaches that assume equal voice can unintentionally reinforce the imbalance.

4.1 Equity and Effectiveness Across Difference

Engaging well across differences is not a skill that is mastered and set aside. It requires ongoing reflection on impact, willingness to receive feedback about how one's approach landed, and a commitment to adjusting practice when it causes harm, even unintentional harm.

Build learners' ability to evaluate conflict engagement for both effectiveness (did it produce a workable outcome that both parties can live with) and equity (did both parties have a genuine voice and agency in shaping the outcome). Introduce the need to remain open to feedback and adjust when an approach produces unintended inequity or harm.

Conflict & Team Health

Teams develop conflict cultures over time, characteristic patterns of how they handle tension, disagreement, and rupture. These patterns shape performance, psychological safety, and the team's ability to learn and adapt. This 2–4 Specialized Credential shifts the unit of analysis from the individual to the team, examining how unresolved conflict accumulates into dysfunction and what leaders and team members can do to shift those patterns.

Learners will explore the relationship between conflict norms and team health, how to diagnose a team's conflict culture, and practical approaches for intervening at the team level to create conditions where productive disagreement is possible.

1.1 Conflict Cultures and Team Health

Teams do not handle conflict randomly. Over time teams develop recognizable norms and patterns around conflict, whether they are expressed or not.

Build learners' understanding of how conflict norms develop and how they influence overall team health and effectiveness. Conflict may be embraced, expressed, avoided, and resolved in both healthy and unhealthy ways. The conflict culture influences team psychological safety, trust, learning, and performance.

2.1 Diagnosing a Team's Conflict Patterns

Team conflict is not always visible as open disagreement. It may appear through disengagement, avoidance, undermined decisions, cliques, or topics that are repeatedly left unspoken.

Develop learners' ability to recognize team conflict patterns and the visible symptoms of conflict such as not having conflict, silence in conversations, power struggles, or misalignment. Explain approaches to go beyond the visible symptoms to expose underlying issues.

3.1 Team-Level Conflict Interventions

Changing a team's conflict culture requires more than addressing individual incidents. Lasting change requires intentional work to create the conditions for healthy conflict to become possible.

Develop learners' ability to design team-level interventions that address the root conditions of unhealthy conflict patterns, drawing on approaches such as norm setting, psychological safety building, and structured dialogue.

4.1 Sustaining Healthy Conflict Norms

Healthy conflict norms require continued reinforcement. Under pressure, changing membership, or heavier workloads, teams can return to earlier patterns unless supportive behaviors and structures remain consistent.

Introduce the conditions that sustain healthy conflict norms such as psychological safety, clear agreements, open engagement, and addressing tension early. Cover the organizational pressures that challenge those conditions and introduce ongoing practices to build and strengthen healthy conflict norms.

Large Group Facilitation

Large Group Facilitation is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who want to develop their ability to design and hold productive group processes when scale introduces complexity that small group approaches cannot adequately address. The course applies across in-person, virtual, and hybrid contexts.

1.1 Distinctive Demands of Large Group Facilitation

Large group facilitation changes more than headcount. Scale reduces individual visibility and increases complexity, requiring facilitators to trust structure, work with subgroup dynamics, and shift their mindset from managing individuals to holding a larger system.

Build learners' understanding of how scale changes facilitation demands and the facilitator mindset needed across in-person, virtual, and hybrid settings. For example, in a small group a facilitator might notice one participant disengaging and check in with them personally, but in a large group that same facilitator has to trust a structure, like small breakout tables with their own reporting mechanism, to surface that same kind of signal without the facilitator personally catching it.

2.1 Reading the Large Group Context

Large groups contain subgroups with different interests, histories, cultures, and levels of power. Size, purpose, composition, safety, and context influence both session design and what the facilitator needs to notice in real time.

Develop learners' ability to read large-group purpose, composition, culture, power, safety, and complexity before and during the session, including when co-facilitation may help. For example, knowing in advance that one subgroup holds significantly more organizational power than another should shape design choices like using anonymous input methods so quieter subgroups aren't drowned out, and during the session that same power dynamic should make the facilitator specifically watch whether the lower-power subgroup's ideas are actually surfacing or quietly getting talked over.

3.1 Participation at Scale

Large groups need deliberate participation architecture so many people can contribute without chaos or domination. Group configuration, sequencing, and connections between small- and large-group work shape inclusion and coherence.

Develop learners' ability to design and test participation architecture that supports diverse contribution and collective understanding at scale. For example, a well-sequenced architecture might start with individual silent reflection so people form their own thinking without social pressure, move into small-group conversation where that thinking gets tested and refined with a few others, and only then bring ideas to the large group, where a subgroup reports out a synthesized point rather than every individual competing for airtime.

4.1 Evaluating Large Group Facilitation

A large group session can appear successful while still excluding important voices or missing its purpose. Facilitators need to assess effectiveness and equity during the session so they can adapt while it still matters.

Build learners' ability to evaluate purpose, participation equity, and live signals that indicate when a large-group approach needs adjustment. For example, a facilitator might notice midway through that report-outs are consistently coming from the same two tables while others stay quiet, and use that as an in-the-moment signal to adjust; perhaps by explicitly rotating which table reports next, or checking in directly with a table that's gone silent.

Leading Without Authority

Leading Without Authority is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who need to guide, influence, or mobilize people who do not report to them—cross-functional partners, matrixed teams, peers, external collaborators, or people with more seniority. As organizations become more networked and interdependent, leadership increasingly depends on voluntary cooperation rather than positional control.

1.1 What Earns Cooperation without Formal Authority

Without formal authority, people cannot rely on compliance. Cooperation depends on whether others see value in contributing, trust the person asking, and believe the work connects to something that matters to them.

Establish what creates voluntary cooperation when positional authority is absent. Explore the difference between compliance and commitment, and help learners understand the other person's motivations, interests, priorities, and perceived value—essentially, what makes participation worthwhile from their perspective.

2.1 Building and Sustaining Credibility and Relationship Capital

Influence without authority depends heavily on the quality of the relationships around the work. Expertise and reliability build credibility, while reciprocity and social capital develop through repeated exchanges of help, access, information, trust, and follow-through. Those assets can also erode through inconsistency, overreach, poor follow-through, or perceived self-interest.

Develop learners' ability to build and consciously maintain the relational foundation that makes informal influence possible. Explore credibility through expertise, reliability, integrity, and follow-through; reciprocity as the give-and-take that sustains working relationships; and social capital as the trust, access, goodwill, and connections that can be mobilized across a network. Include reflection on why a person's informal influence is currently working or not working, and what behaviors are strengthening or eroding it.

3.1 Adapting Influence to People and Context

People respond to different forms of influence depending on what they care about, the relationship, the situation, and the decision being shaped. A single influence style is unlikely to work equally well across stakeholders.

Develop learners' ability to choose an influence approach based on the stakeholder, context, desired outcome, and what the other person values. Explore approaches such as framing, evidence, values, reciprocity, social proof, and relationship-based influence while distinguishing ethical persuasion from manipulation.

4.1 Mobilizing Work You Do Not Control

Leading across functions or organizational boundaries requires more than persuading one person. People with different priorities, reporting lines, and dependencies need enough shared clarity and commitment to move together without a common boss directing the work.

Develop learners' ability to mobilize coordinated action across boundaries. Build on the original coordination focus by covering shared outcomes, ownership, commitments, dependencies, decision clarity, coalition-building, and lightweight coordination practices that support progress without taking authority away from others.

Navigating Competing Interests

Navigating Competing Interests is a 2–4 hour Specialized Credential for professionals who need to make progress when stakeholders have different goals, incentives, constraints, and levels of influence. Formal structures and decision processes rarely tell the whole story: outcomes are also shaped by informal relationships, unwritten rules, dependencies, alliances, and interests that may form well before a formal meeting or approval point. As organizations become more networked, cross-functional, and interdependent, Tomorrow-Ready professionals need to understand how work and decisions actually move through the organization without becoming politically naive or manipulative.

1.1 Reading the Informal Landscape

Formal roles and decision processes rarely show the full picture of how work actually gets done. Informal relationships, access, credibility, unwritten norms, prior commitments, and informal vetoes can shape an outcome before the formal decision point.

Develop learners' ability to read the informal organizational landscape around an initiative or decision. Explore how to distinguish the formal process from the way influence actually moves, including who matters, who has access, what unwritten rules shape behavior, and where support or resistance may form.

2.1 Understanding Competing Interests and Dependencies

Stakeholders can support the same organizational goal while still facing different incentives, risks, timelines, or dependencies. When these differences are treated simply as resistance or misalignment, the real source of tension is often missed.

Build learners' ability to look beneath stated positions and identify the interests, incentives, constraints, and dependencies shaping stakeholder behavior. Explore why competing interests can be legitimate, how control of resources or information creates leverage, and how one group's choices can constrain another group's options.

3.1 Alliances, Sequencing and Decision Pathways

Support for an initiative is often built before the formal decision point. Who is engaged, in what sequence, and when concerns are surfaced can materially affect whether an issue gains momentum, stalls, or arrives at a decision meeting already decided in practice.

Develop learners' ability to build support and deliberately shape how an issue moves through the organization. Cover purposeful alliances, coalition-building, stakeholder sequencing, pre-wiring, timing, surfacing opposition early, and understanding when the formal meeting is only one part of the real decision process.

4.1 Ethical Navigation of Competing Interests

Skillfully navigating organizational interests does not require manipulation, but it does require judgment about trade-offs, transparency, advocacy, and whose costs or priorities are being pushed aside. Political skill can serve shared goals or narrow self-interest.

Develop learners' ability to navigate competing interests effectively while maintaining clear ethical boundaries. Explore legitimate advocacy versus manipulation, transparency and selective disclosure, reciprocity, pressure, trade-offs, and how to test whether an approach is serving the organization rather than only personal advantage.

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