

# Your Guide To Building A Comprehensive Leadership Development Program

Engage and Grow  
Every Person On Your Team



## WHY THIS MATTERS

# Personalized Development is Key to Elevating Your Team's Success

Gallup tells us that 85% of employees are disengaged from their work and that 70% of employee engagement is dependent on the relationship an employee has with their direct manager.

This alarming statistic should have every manager step back and ask, “Does every person on my team have a personal development plan so they can feel engaged and growing, personally and professionally?”

If we can't answer yes to that question, then we know we have work to do as a leader.

A big part of employee satisfaction is how connected they feel to their manager. If your team knows your leadership style, feels comfortable approaching you with problems and wins, and senses that you have taken the time to get to know them as individuals, that goes a long way in employee retention too.

Teams are much more likely to succeed in meeting company and team goals when employee engagement is a focus, leading to a significant decrease in factors like turnover and absenteeism, and an increase in productivity. Overall, development programs foster new skills, encourages teamwork and collaboration, and could even help your meetings be more efficient and productive.

But it's also important to note that this relationship-building happens through

personalized development as well as whole team development because not every team member will work or think the same way.

We're often surprised when an employee is disengaged, yet we've failed by not giving them something to strive toward through their own development plan.

At Leadr, we help organizations like yours engage and grow team members at every level of the organization through our people development software.

We've seen that a commitment to your organization's core values leads to engaged team members. For us, just putting our Core Foundations on the wall doesn't cut it, which is why we're committed to actually living out our 5 Core Foundations, one of which is that every person should have a leadership development plan. So we developed LeadrU, a five-month leadership development track that helps us engage and grow every member of our team.

We get so many questions about how to implement this practice utilizing our software that we decided to create this eBook as a tool to help leaders like you implement your own programs within your organization.

So grab your notebook (or open your notes section of Leadr) and feel free to take notes on how you can build this within your own organization.

# LeadrU is a Tool for Development

We have seen personalized development can bridge the gap between being a great employee and a great leader.

Our internal program, LeadrU is structured enough to bring consistency to our leadership development efforts as a company but also allows room for the employee to focus on customizing it to their own personal career and growth goals.

LeadrU includes two major phases: the “Prerequisites List,” and the LeadrU Personal Plan.

**Click here to download our LeadrU Template!**

You can also download our template at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1X7z1BovA7NiLHQ1e7otkQHDcIDOGVDRQ0zHZULMBDA/edit>

## LeadrU Prerequisite List

Here's what each employee must complete

- **Our 10 Onboarding Videos with Application Questions.**

These videos are an introduction to Leadr culture and samples of talks from great leaders we admire. This sets the tone for what employees will learn throughout their program.

- **Share your “How to work well with me” Survey with your manager & HR.**

This survey consists of information including communication style, personal insights, ways not to communicate with you, what motivates you to do your best work, what demotivates you, how do you show you value someone, and how do you like to be shown that you're valued. This helps us value each team member for their unique strengths and personalities.

- **Profile card completed, including personality tests.**

The profile in the Leadr Software shares personal and professional insights about who you are and how to work with you. At Leadr, we check these insights before meetings to know how best to work with a co-worker or on special events to celebrate someone with their favorite food, drink, or incentive.

- **Be in current role for 90+ days (HR will confirm/sign off) Has asked for feedback from manager and/or team members within the last 30 days.**

We believe feedback is the cornerstone of growth. At Leadr, we provide feedback with presenters and peers after every meeting and encourage team members to regularly ask and give feedback to each other.

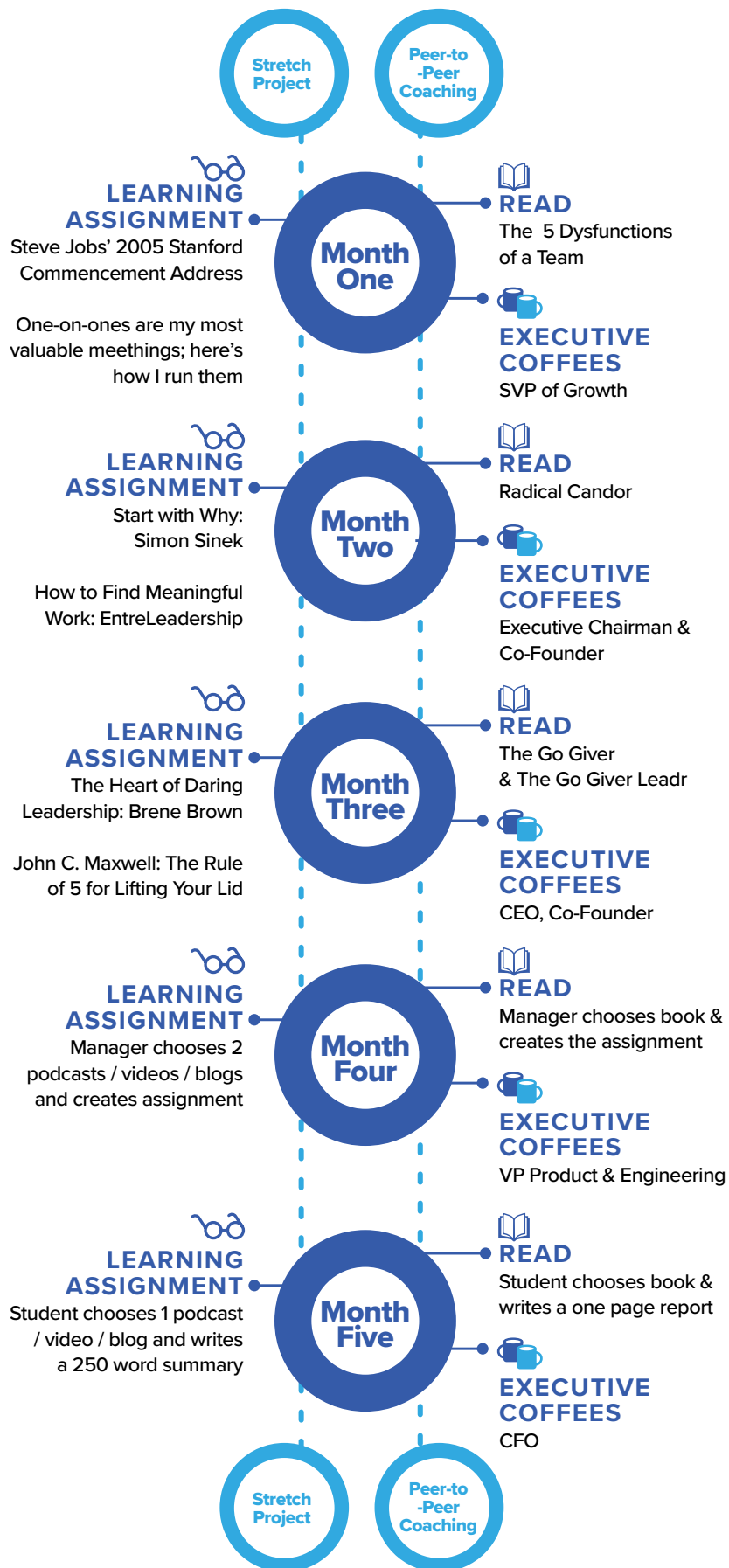
- **Share your current goals, projects, current responsibilities, etc., so this program will benefit you personally.**

- **Commitment to complete a personalized development plan (template in Leadr) with your manager over the next 3 months if not done so already.**

- **Team Member schedules a LeadrU Meeting with Manager for sign off approval (template in Leadr under “LeadrU Application”)**

- **Employee sends Recap of LeadrU Application Meeting to HR**

**AFTER THAT, IT'S OFF TO THE RACES!**



# Personal Development Plan

Once the prerequisites are finished, the employee is ready to move on to the second phase, which is a personalized LeadrU plan. Each person's development plan includes several kinds of projects, experiences, and assignments for employees, but it's divided into five key components:



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## Reading

At Leadr, we love books and sharing what we've learned from them. Assigning a book helps us combine readings that relate to our core values while allowing the employee to explore areas where they want to develop and pursue interests. Later in the program, LeadrU students will complete a project over one of our company's favorite and most influential books, from *The 5 Dysfunctions of a Team* to *Radical Candor*. This project helps the team member connect what they've learned from the book to their work at Leadr.

## Learning & Application

LeadrU also includes two learning assignments per month of the program that are related to what the team member is reading. The assignments help them dig deeper into the topics discussed in the book and challenge and stretch their thinking.

## Executive Coffees

Having 1:1 time with executives is a great learning experience because the team member gets to hear firsthand from the leaders who run the organization.

This experience offers undivided time for team members to ask questions and request feedback from leaders they likely don't get to speak with on a daily basis, if ever. This helps us equip others to step into that role someday, and demonstrate the skills and experience they need to work towards through this program.

## Peer-to-Peer Coaching

In addition to conversations with executives, we also know the power of collaborative work with peers. So we host a monthly in-person discussion with others in the LeadrU program, where participants discuss the books they've been reading and how it changed their perspective. This allows them to connect it to their role at Leadr and their experience on our team.

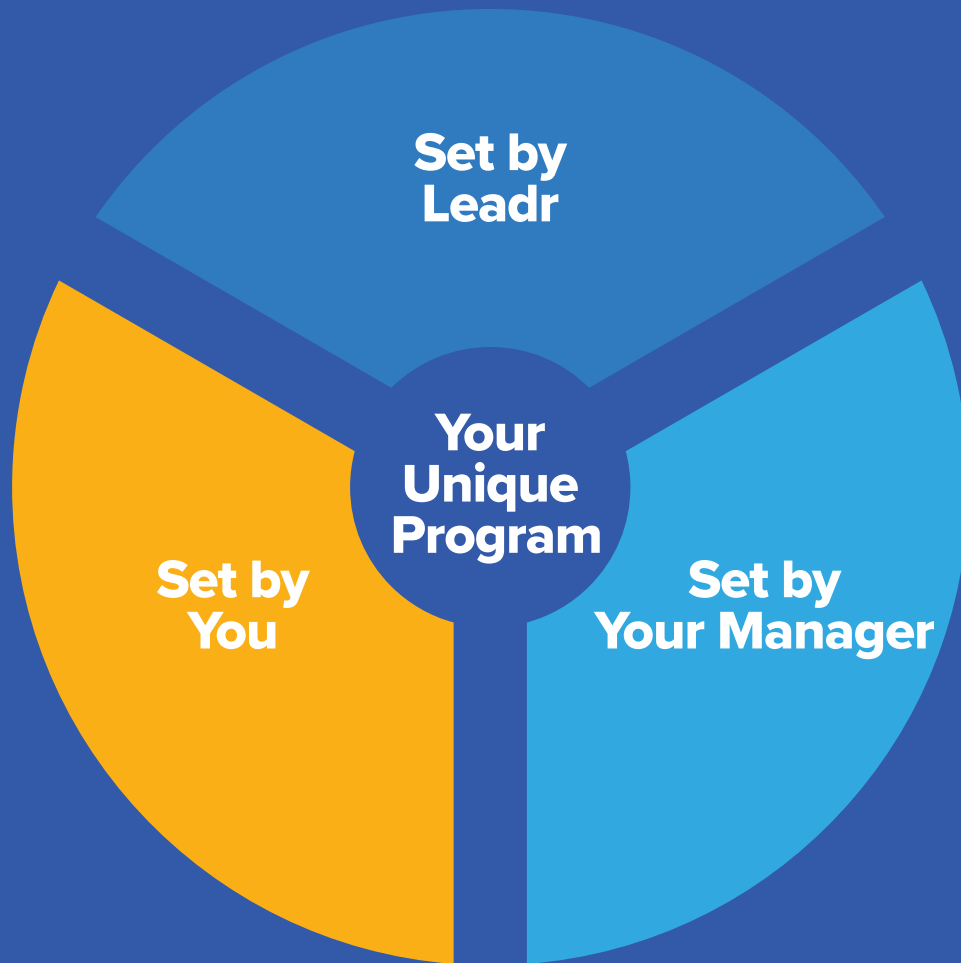
**Conversation starters at these discussions include questions like:**

- Tell the team about a time where you broke trust with someone. What damage did it cause? How did you begin rebuilding trust with them?
- Of the 5 Dysfunctions of a Team, which one do you think you struggle with the most? What's one small step you can take to work on it? How can your team help you?

## Customization

And we wrap it all up with this plan being customized to each individual.

What is key about this LeadrU development plan is that it's customizable. While there are sections that are required company-wide, there are also sections where the employee's manager can assign projects, reading, or learning that is relevant to the employee. Every employee on the LeadrU plan will read *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* in the first month and have the opportunity to engage in an exclusive conversation with our CEO. But later on in the program, there's flexibility in the plan for the employee to focus on and pursue areas of leadership growth that interest them and they're passionate about.



**We believe it's this combination of structure and creativity that is most engaging for our team and helps us develop team members into great leaders with a foundation of managerial skills and essential knowledge and experiences that build on their unique skills and gifts.**

TEMPLATE

# Your Customized Leadership Development Plan

This approach of balancing structure and creativity informed the way we designed LeadrU. A few weeks before the program begins, each participant receives this template to build their customized leadership development plan alongside their manager. For the first three months, almost all of the projects are determined by Leadr, but by month four, as each participant develops, nearly every piece of the program is determined by the participant and their manager. This allows employees to act as leaders as they become more independent and confident in their decision-making abilities.



## Personalized Plan for Employee Name

Content/Project	Due Month 1	Due Month 2	Due Month 3	Due Month 4	Due Month 5
<b>Books</b>	The 5 Dysfunctions of a Team	Radical Candor	The Go Giver & The Go Giver Leadr	Manager chooses book & creates the assignment	Student chooses Book & writes a 1 page report
<b>Learning Assignments</b>	#1 - Steve Jobs' 2005 Stanford Commencement Address  #2 - One-on-ones are my most valuable meetings; here's how I run them	#3 - Start with Why: Simon Sinek  #4 - How to Find Meaningful Work: EntreLeadership	#5 - The Heart of Daring Leadership - Brene Brown  #6 - John C Maxwell "The Rule of 5 for Lifting Your Lid"	Manager chooses 2 Podcast/Video/Blog & Creates assignment	Student chooses 1 Podcast/Video/Blog & writes a 250 word summary
<b>Executive Coffees</b>	SVP of Growth	Executive Chairman & Co-Founder	CEO & Co-Founder	VP Product & Engineering	CFO
<b>Peer-to-Peer Coaching</b>	Session on ____	Session on ____	Session on ____	Session on ____	Session on ____
<b>Stretch Projects</b>	➔	➔	➔	➔	➔



SAMPLE

# Communicating about LeadrU with your team

*To save you time communicating all of this to your team, here's a sample email you can send out outlining all of the details. We also recommend having an optional informational meeting a week or two prior to your development program kickoff to address any questions.*

**Hey Team,**

So Listen:

94% of employees say they would stay at a company longer if it invested in their career development. That's a big percentage and it's not to be ignored!

Here at \_\_\_\_\_, we are committed to investing in each and every one of our staff [that's YOU!], in leadership and career development. One of our ways to invest in you is through our leadership development program and we are ready for our next class to begin!

Orientation is on \_\_\_\_\_ and if you've been here for around 90 days, we would love for you to take part. We may even sneak you in if you are on the 75-80 day mark :)

See info below...

## **What does LeadrU look like?**

### **5 Month Program**

- 5 Books Read
- 5 Hours spent with the Exec Team
- 10 Learning Assignments
- 1 Stretch Project
- Group Discussions
- New Leadership Opportunities

### **What Are My Next Steps?**

1. Reply directly to me and let me know you are wanting to join the leadership development program for this session.
2. Set up a meeting, this week or next, with your manager and do the following to fill out your LeadrU Personalized Plan: Make a copy of [this sheet](#) and you and your manager fill out the highlighted sections.
3. Send me the following by \_\_\_\_\_:
  - Completed LeadrU personalized Plan
  - The list of books that are on your plan that you will need. We will purchase these for you as a thank you for investing in your professional development!

We can't wait to learn together!





# Next Steps to Consider

As the program manager, there are some key considerations for you to make. Think through these questions before finalizing your plan.

**1. How many people should go through the program at once?**

Remember, if you include Executive Coffees, your leadership team will be investing time with each member of the program.

**2. What books or resources will you implement in your plan?**

Consider learning materials that support your organization's mission, explore your industry, or provide excellent leadership advice.

**3. What learning assignments will you implement? What are you trying to get participants to consider or question with these assignments?**

At Leadr, we utilize the Learning module in our software to send thought-provoking questions about the reading materials. Assignments are not meant to quiz employees, but to have them think critically about how the learnings can benefit their leadership journey.

**4. What leadership team members will participate in the executive coffees?**

These volunteers need to be committed to the development of your team. It's critical that they use their time to provide thoughtful advice, ask intentional questions, and personalize each conversation.

**5. Will you have an acceptance process for interested employees or can anyone join? Will you allow participants to continue if they continually miss deadlines?**

Think through this with your leadership team.

**6. How long should your program run? It should be long enough to grow and engage employees, but not so long they become burned out.**

Ensure every project is intentional. If participants are growing, they'll stay engaged.

## Implementing Your Leadership Development Program

Once you know the layout of your program, identify the tools and resources you and the participants will need, and have communicated the plan to your organization, it's time to begin developing leaders!

For a smooth program, we recommend planning in a few activities and milestones:

- Host an orientation for participants to ask questions and get details before they commit.
- Track the progress of each participant. We do this through our Leadr people development software.
- Plan a celebration or reception for participants at the end of the program.

# Ready to see Leadr in Action?

**Click here to connect with a member  
of our team for a live demo of the tool.**

