

Leading the Virtual Project Team

Duration: 2 Days

Target Audience

This workshop is intended for Project Managers, Team Leaders, and Business Analysts working on related projects and or programs.

		Role	
		Leader	Participant
Type	Project		
	Operations		

Conceptually, virtual teams can be considered and treated along two dimensions:

1. The type of work, which includes **projects** and ongoing **operations**.
2. The role, which includes that of **leader** and that of **participant**.

This workshop will be oriented toward **projects** as the type of work, and toward **leaders** as the role. Specifically, it will be designed for project managers of virtual team projects.



Overview

The distinguishing characteristic of the virtual team is not where the team members are located, it is how they interact. On a virtual team, rather than interact face-to-face, team members interact through technological means. This creates special challenges, but it also provides certain advantages. To overcome the challenges and exploit the advantages requires new skills as well as familiar skills, applied with different emphasis.

In this workshop, we will explore various tools and techniques for maximizing the advantages and addressing the challenges of the virtual team. We will look at best practices for participating on a project team in a leadership capacity and as a team member, with particular emphasis on leading the virtual project team.

We will examine the nature of the virtual team and the psychological aspects of working on a virtual team. We will also look at commonly held misconceptions about the virtual team.

The course will be conducted as a facilitated workshop consisting of a very high degree of student participation and interaction, realistic scenarios and very practical exercises in which students gain firsthand experience in some of the most useful virtual team techniques.

During the workshop, students will create an individualized skill development plan which they will then use in the workplace to cultivate the skills they believe will be most valuable to them in their work.

Learning Objectives

Students will improve in their ability to:

- Overcome the challenges of working on a virtual team.
- Exploit the unique characteristics of the virtual team.
- Use soft skills to improve personal and team performance, regardless of role.
- Make better use of technology to improve personal and team effectiveness.
- Apply best practices in communications and team leadership.
- Lead the virtual team, specifically in a project environment.

Day 1 (afternoon)

Working virtually

1. Terminology
2. Concepts
3. Doing the implicit things explicitly

Myths, advantages and challenges

1. Instructor experience
2. Student experience

Teamwork

1. Cultivating relationships and creating rapport
2. Team building
3. High performing teams

Means of communication

1. Possibilities
2. Rationale for choosing

Communication planning

1. Stakeholders
2. Information management
3. Techniques

Conference calls

1. On being the leader (increased emphasis)
2. On being the host
3. On being a participant (decreased emphasis)
4. Tips and techniques
5. In concert with other communication tools

1-on-1 calls

1. Pitfalls
2. Techniques for maximizing value

Day 2 (morning)

Documentation

1. Importance
2. Making tacit knowledge explicit
3. Version control
4. Change management
5. Storage and retrieval
6. Collaboration space (focus on SharePoint)

Leadership

1. Creating **presence** when you are not present
2. Cultivating commitment and belonging
3. Building the virtual team
4. High performing virtual teams
5. Engendering confidence on the team

Day 2 (afternoon)

A brief glimpse at new trends

1. Wikis
2. Web-based collaboration tools
3. LiveMeeting

Effective use of equipment to improve communications and leadership

1. Phone
2. Headset
3. Web cam
4. Other video resources
5. Computer

Specific tips and techniques for special topics

1. Career considerations
2. Language issues
3. Cultural differences
4. Dealing with time zones

Working with vendors

1. Contract management
2. Status gathering
3. Controlling progress

Working with the sponsor

1. Engendering confidence
2. Status reporting
3. Communication planning

Closure

1. Commitments
2. Follow-up plans-action plans