

8-Weeks To A Better Place to Work Module Details

Module 1: A Better Way: Engage in Practices – April 16th

In our first module, we will address the challenges and opportunities in our workplaces today, and the need for a different approach. We will begin with a few practices to try including reflective writing, an 'At my best' exercise, and asking 'What do we want our culture to be?' You will work on designing your own personal leadership plan that will be developed during the duration of the course. Topics covered include:

- Slow death in organizations
- The cost of doing nothing
- Flourishing versus languishing
- The "Be Positive" framework for shifting culture
- The through-line approach to implementing practices
- Asking transformational questions
- What is a positive culture?

Module 2: Positive Deviance & Positive Organizing – April 23rd

Guest Speaker **Cheri Torres** Lead Catalyst, Speaker and Author at *Collaboration by Design*.
Co-author with Jackie Stavros of *Conversations Worth Having: Using Appreciative Inquiry to Fuel Productive and Meaningful Engagement*

In this module, we'll explore three shifts in thinking that can help us to positively deviate from the conventional way we operate in most workplaces. These shifts include shifting from downstream to upstream thinking, from a program approach to a cultural approach, and from conventional management to transformational leadership. We will share stories from organizations that take this approach. The class will learn the 5 Principles of Positive Organizing, which 1) invite people to find their purpose, 2) engage them in authentic conversation, 3) empower them to see possibility, 4) focus them on the common good, and 5) encourage them to trust the emergent process. We work through an example of how these principles were put into action with an organization. Practices we will try include:

- Appreciative inquiry – we will have a conversation with expert Cheri Torres, and practice the use of generative questions to shift workplace conversations
- Examining our hypocrisies as leaders
- Reflective action

Homework will include filling out five brief assessments provided to get a rough idea of where your organization or team is at based on the principles of positive organizing.

Module 3: Shift Yourself First – April 30th

Guest Speaker **Mary-Lou MacDonald** National Practice Lead Canada, Health & Performance HUB International

Module 3 will help you and your teams to shift to more resilient cycles. You'll discover practices that help to prevent burnout, and how to support yourself and others to come back strong if burnout occurs.

The focus is on learning to shift yourself first as a leader into these patterns before expecting others to shift. Practices include:

- Working smarter
- Email intelligence
- Developing good sleep habits

- Learning to break for energy
- Let Go, Continue and Start
- Disconnecting from work

Module 4: Ignite Positivity at Work – May 13th

In module 4 you will learn how to invite flourishing into your workplace! You will gain knowledge about how positive and resilient teams impact organizational success, and the practices that increase positive emotion and thereby increase creativity, engagement, innovation, customer service and many other outcomes.

Topics and practices we will engage in include:

- Understanding positivity
- How downward spirals occur
- The negativity bias
- How to increase positive emotions and create upward spirals
- What is mindfulness?
- Mindfulness practices such as learning how to mindfully listen
- Gratitude practices
- Meditation practices
- Positivity ratios

Module 5: Positive and Resilient Teams – May 21st

Guest Speaker **Graham Lowe** President of The Graham Lowe Group
 Author, *Creating Healthy Organizations*

Module 5 explores the difference between a real team and a pseudo team. You will develop team practices to increase team positivity, including learning to lead an effective team debrief.

To create real teams, or increase the effectiveness of the teams participants lead, you will:

- Develop a set of team practices
- Explore ways of increasing positivity in their teams
- Learn and practice leading an effective team debrief
- Practice a set of questions designed to work through team conflict
- Take the AffinaOD Team Positivity Test provided to get a baseline idea of where your team is at in terms of positive and negative emotion and how team positivity can be increased.

Module 6: Inspire Psychological Health – May 27th

Guest Speaker **Mary Ann Baynton** Workplace Relations Specialist, Author, Consultant, Speaker
 Director of Strategy and Collaboration, Workplace Strategies for Mental Health, Canada Life
 Past Co-Chair of the Technical Committee, National Standard of Canada: Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace

In module 6, you will build on your success in recognizing and accommodating for mental illness in the workplace and learn how to inspire mental wellness. Discover how other organizations have developed practices to make psychological health a part of the workplace conversation. Expert Mary Ann Baynton will share advice on what leaders can do differently to set a foundation for psychological health at work, including:

- Making psychological health a part of the workplace conversation
- Declaring your vision and commitment to transform culture

- Maximizing mental energy
- Developing psychological contracts.

You will practice reflective writing and discuss some questions on your leadership practices that impact psychological health in your workplace. You will learn some reflective questions to ask when going through major changes at work. You will fill out the Initial Scan (Stress Satisfaction Offset Score and Stress Satisfaction Index) from the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace (the Standard) and learn where to find tools and resources related to psychological health to use in your workplace.

Module 7: Develop a Compelling Vision – June 10th

Guest Speaker **Robert E Quinn** Co-author, *The Economics of Higher Purpose: Eight Counterintuitive Steps for Creating a Purpose-Driven Organization*
Professor Emeritus at the University of Michigan, Ross School of Business
Co-founder of the Center for Positive Organizations.

In module 7 we will explore the importance of vision and purpose. We'll have a conversation with expert Robert Quinn about why it makes economic sense to be purpose-driven, both personally and organizationally. We'll also discuss how to present an inspiring vision for change that engages people, whether it is the vision of your team, department, committee or your organization as a whole. This requires an understanding of why and how your culture needs to change and building the behaviours and practices to achieve that vision. In this module you will further explore the question, "What do we want our culture to be?" You will do some reflective writing on four questions that can have a profound effect on creating a new vision for the culture of your organization. We'll discuss together your answers to these questions, with the anticipation of presenting this back in your own workplace.

Module 8: Create a Learning Culture & Tools for Change – June 18th

The final module will focus on how to build a learning culture at work. We will look at how the language we use at work can help us grow, and how to lead emergence to create a culture where we can learn from our mistakes. Topics such as 1) finding language that helps us to grow, 2) asking "How can we create a culture where we learn from mistakes so that employees can exceed expectations?" and 3) learning how to lead the emergent process are all included in the discussion. We will also look at the plethora of tools available to you for creating positive change and discuss how to continue this ongoing work of transforming your culture.