



Matrix Management Training

A yearlong program providing current and aspiring matrix managers the targeted training they need to master the challenges they face.

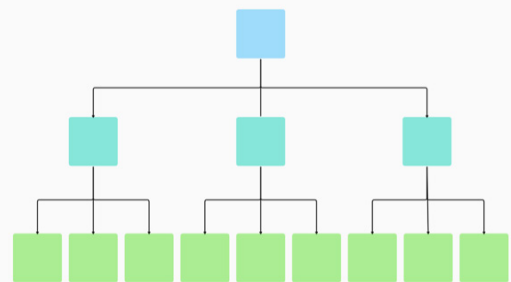
The majority of organizations today have cross-functional teams working on a range of initiatives, from small projects to large, multi-year programs. The "matrix managers" leading these teams face unique challenges.

What is the difference between a matrix manager and a regular manager? Matrix managers are responsible for teams and results, but many (or all) of the people "working" for them are not their direct reports. It is significantly more difficult to get things done when one's employees are splitting their time among multiple managers and projects.

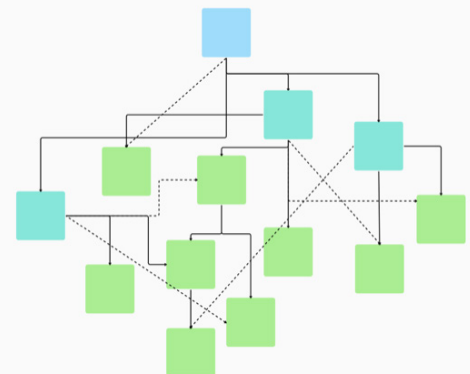
To succeed, matrix managers need to:

- Motivate people (over whom they have no formal authority) to do things when others with more power are competing for their time
- Influence leaders to commit to a shared strategy, and keep them aligned as disagreements arise
- Build positive relationships with potential collaborators, influencers, and partners, internally and externally
- Manage cross-departmental conflict and escalation when it's not clear who makes the final call (or when people dispute the decisions made)
- Inform and include numerous stakeholders, while tactfully limiting the number of people participating in meetings and decisions

A typical organization chart:



How things actually work in a matrix:



These demands require advanced skills not usually included in conventional management training programs.

THE JOB IS GETTING EVEN HARDER

The job of a matrix manager (of all managers, actually) has become even more challenging since the pandemic, with more people working remotely and feeling disconnected from their managers, their colleagues, and the mission of the organization.

Matrix managers are also working to increase the diversity of their teams, apply an equity lens to their work, and support more inclusion in the workplace. These long-overdue priorities require new insights and skills for many.

Even though expectations are high for these managers, they typically receive little specialized training to help them succeed in this complex environment.

FINALLY, TARGETED TRAINING FOR MATRIX MANAGERS

Our Matrix Management Training includes matrix-specific modules, as well as the management fundamentals these critical managers need. The program can be delivered virtually or in person. However, most clients choose to use a combination of delivery methods.

The program includes:

- *Twelve months* of training for a cohort of 16 current or aspiring matrix managers
- *50 hours* of attendance at various training events, including two-hour virtual large- and small-group sessions; all-day, in-person Bootcamps; learning partner



The magic of the training is the magic of Deb. As a facilitator, she's forthright and skilled at keeping groups on task. But perhaps her greatest strength is really seeing through to the person trying to be a better manager. Deb works with her participants as individuals, not as interchangeable widgets.

JUANITA CONSTIBLE

*Senior Climate and Health Advocate,
NRDC*

calls; and one-on-one meetings with the coach/trainer

- *Modules on the topics matrix managers need most*, including how to build relationships across silos; dancing with difference; how to manage cross-functional teams; influencing colleagues, partners, and senior leaders; staying cool when things get hot; facilitating inclusive meetings; and aligning remote teams
- Numerous *opportunities to learn and practice* the survival skills successful matrix managers use to ace difficult conversations, to de-escalate challenging meetings, and to give feedback quickly and confidently
- A *FIRO-B Team Workshop*, where participants explore how their leadership preferences can work for and against them as they manage projects and teams



- *Peer-feedback Bootcamps*, in which teams of four participants apply what they've learned and watch themselves on video, which provides indisputable evidence of what's working and what needs to improve
- A *Matrix Management Feedback Survey* of those who know the participant well enough to rate how well they demonstrate a suite of matrix management competencies
- *Pre-work* for each session, and curated post-session reading and listening assignments



I have learned so much from Deb on how to be an engaged leader who can empower staff, support their professional growth, and set clear expectations for my own and their performance. She has taught me how to communicate with clarity, to engage rather than dictate, and to lead with confidence instead of fear. Thanks to Deb's training and coaching, I and my team are among the most satisfied and highest performers in my organization.

JOHN MOORE

Director of the Sustainable FERC Project

MULTIPLE STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN MANAGERS

The training goes beyond conventional methods (presentations, discussions, and tests) to take advantage of how adults actually learn and change, by:

- Giving participants time to absorb, practice, and reinforce the learning over 12 months, using digestible modules that build cumulatively
- Applying the learning to real work situations in small-group peer clinics
- Using video-based peer feedback to break bad habits and build better ones
- Providing multi-rater survey feedback that maps directly into the curriculum
- Sharing progress on action learning assignments with learning partners between sessions
- Having participants share development plans with their managers, and discuss how to continue to support their learning after graduation
- Using virtual collaboration tools to make online sessions interactive and engaging

AN INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE

Investing in the development of your matrix managers yields a number of lasting results:

- *Better managers*: The graduates of this program manage higher-performing teams that deliver ambitious results and increased impact. They are better at inspiring and retaining staff, giving feedback and quickly addressing performance issues, managing complexity and diversity, and being strategic and inclusive.



- *Better communicators:* Some managers try to avoid challenging conversations altogether, some resort to scolding and lecturing, and others wait until they're fed up and lose their cool. The Bootcamps are the capstone of the program, catalyzing permanent improvements to ineffective (and often damaging) communication defaults.
- *Retention of high performers:* This investment sends your leaders a clear signal that you recognize their potential and are willing to invest in them.
- *Positive role models for future leaders:* The impact of this program persists through multiple generations of managers in your organization.

BUILDING TRUST AND BREAKING DOWN SILOS

We train matrix managers from the *same organization*, strengthening their connection to the organization's mission and culture, and to one another.

Meeting together in large and small groups over 12 months builds the cohort's identity as a team and their trust in one another, breaks through silos, and makes it easier to collaborate and to solve problems cross-functionally. Graduates say that this is as much a team-building program as a training one.

DETERMINING WHO IS READY

This program is appropriate for matrix managers at all levels. Ideal candidates are doing well (the training is not designed to "fix" underperforming managers) and aspire to grow into higher levels of leadership.

For the best ROI, a cohort of 16 managers is optimal. Cohorts of 12 or eight are also welcome.



Deb teaches how to build a positive team culture through open mindsets, how to use inclusive communication strategies to navigate difficult conversations, and most importantly, how to manage one's self.

LUCY ERIN O'BRIEN, PH.D.

*Associate Professor of Molecular &
Cellular Physiology, Stanford University
School of Medicine*





About the Trainer

Debra Howard founded her consulting business in 1991. She specializes in executive coaching, management development, and action-packed training for improving team and individual performance. After coaching leaders for more than 25 years and seeing how little improvement they made after attending extensive (and often expensive) public management training programs, and how most of the programs barely touched upon the complexities of matrix management, she decided to launch her own in 2016, and has been delivering it ever since. A substantive and spirited presenter, and a skilled facilitator, Deb enjoys sharing her extensive knowledge about management, leadership, and organizational effectiveness. She is known for a no-nonsense approach to training that focuses on permanent improvement and change.

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