



FRONTLINE LEADERSHIP

PROGRAM GUIDEBOOK

FALL 2026

EXPERIENCED LEADERS



**SHIPPENSBURG
UNIVERSITY**

Office of Workforce Development

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General Information

Welcome to the Frontline Leadership - Experienced Leaders program. This professional development opportunity, delivered by the Office of Workforce Development at Shippensburg University, is designed for experienced leaders ready for their next level of impact. The program includes 32 hours of synchronous online instruction and a minimum of four hours of asynchronous self-paced learning. Completion of this program leads to a noncredit certificate from Shippensburg University.

Dates

All times are Eastern Time. There are two “make-up” sessions scheduled in case a session is canceled due to instructor illness. If needed, they will be on November 19 and December 3.

September 17	Student Orientation from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Sept. 24 - Nov. 12	<u>Thursday Online Classes</u> Session One from 10 a.m. – 12 noon Session Two from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
November 19	Make-Up Session One (if needed)
December 3	Make-Up Session Two (if needed)

Attendance

To earn the Certificate of Completion students must fully attend 13 of the 16 of the sessions; attendance will be taken each week at the beginning and end of each session.

If you need to miss a session, please contact your supervisor and Mary Angela Baker (mabaker@ship.edu) before the session.

There are two “make-up” sessions scheduled in case a session is canceled due to instructor illness. If needed, they will be on November 19 and December 3.

Zoom Links

Orientation

September 17 - 10:00 am - 11:00 am

<https://ship.zoom.us/j/94887252160>

Meeting ID 9488 725 2160

Program Celebration Ceremony

November 12 from 2:15 – 3:00 p.m.

<https://ship.zoom.us/j/94887252160>

Meeting ID 9488 725 2160

Full-Group Sessions

September 24 - November 12

10:00 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

<https://ship.zoom.us/j/94887252160>

Meeting ID 9488 725 2160

Issues with Connecting

Contact Mary Angela Baker ASAP via email at mabaker@ship.edu with any connection issues.

Program Learning Objectives

- Expand strategic influence: Leverage new insights and practical tools to navigate organizational change, align key stakeholders, and drive strategic initiatives in a rapidly evolving workplace.
- Elevate Executive Presence: Build an authentic, high-impact leadership style through peer collaboration, self-reflection, and communication practices that inspire confidence across the team.
- Enhance sustainable high-performance practices: Implement actionable leadership behaviors and accountability systems that keep team momentum strong and performance high.

Calendar

Frontline Leadership Topics and Instructors

Date	Session Topic	Session Time	Instructor
September 17	Student Orientation	10:00 – 11:00 am	
September 24	Leading with Influence and Executive Presence	10:00 am – 12 pm	Tom Templeton
September 24	Leading with Emotional Intelligence	1:00 – 3:00 pm	Matthew Shupp
October 1	AI for Business	10:00 am – 12 pm	Viet Dao
October 1	Leading Organizational Change	1:00 – 3:00 pm	Wendy Kubasko
October 8	Navigating Conflict and Difficult Conversations	10:00 am – 12 pm	Kara Laskowski
October 8	Strategic Negotiation Adaptive Communication	1:00 - 3:00 pm	Nicole McCartan
October 15	Lifelong Learning as Leadership	10:00 am – 12 pm	Josefine Smith
October 15	Cultural Intelligence and Global Leadership	1:00 – 3:00 pm	Jody Fernando
October 22	Strategic Thinking Innovative Problem Solving	10:00 am – 12 pm	Tracy Montoro
October 22	Fostering Effective Workplace Cultures	1:00 – 3:00 pm	Estevanny Turns
October 29	Leading High-Performing Teams	10:00 am - 12 noon	Tammy Manko
October 29	Shaping and Sustaining Workplace Culture	1:00 – 3:00 pm	Manuel Ruiz
November 5	Executive Communication and Collaborative Leadership	10:00 am – 12 pm	Tammy Manko
November 5	Leading Through Toxicity	1:00 - 3:00 pm	Matthew Shupp
November 12	Executive Presence & Strategic Personal Branding	10:00 am – 12 pm	Victoria Kerr
November 12	Leadership Foundations Wrap-Up	1:00 – 2:10 pm	Manuel Ruiz
November 12	Graduation Ceremony	2:15 – 3:00 pm	All
November 19	Make-Up Session 1		
December 3	Make-Up Session 2		

Session Topic Description, Discussion Questions, and Success Indicators

September 24

Leading with Influence and Executive Presence

This session helps experienced leaders strengthen their influence, executive presence, and ability to move people toward a shared purpose. Participants will explore practical strategies for building trust, driving growth and improvement, and leading with authenticity, expertise, integrity, confidence, and composure.

Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Understand the key elements of executive presence.
- Build credibility, trust, and influence.
- Strengthen communication and interpersonal skills.
- Build alignment and support around shared goals.
- Navigate difficult conversations and situations effectively.
- Apply emotional intelligence to leadership.
- Lead with greater clarity and intentionality.

Leading with Emotional Intelligence: Advanced Strategies for Leadership Effectiveness and Organizational Impact

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is no longer considered simply a desirable leadership characteristic; it is a critical competency for creating high-performing teams and healthy organizational cultures. This advanced session moves beyond foundational EI concepts by exploring how emotionally intelligent leaders influence engagement, trust, collaboration, and organizational effectiveness. Drawing from an Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EIL) with a particular emphasis on the "Others" competencies, participants will examine advanced skills including empathy, coaching, influence, conflict management, and relationship building.

The session also integrates The Leadership Challenge® framework, demonstrating how emotional intelligence strengthens the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. Through reflection, case studies, and practical leadership applications, participants will identify strategies to enhance emotional awareness, strengthen interpersonal effectiveness, navigate difficult conversations, and foster psychologically safe, high-performing teams that support organizational success.

Learning Objectives

By the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Evaluate their own emotional intelligence strengths and growth areas, with particular attention to interpersonal ("Others") competencies that influence leadership effectiveness.
- Apply advanced emotional intelligence strategies—including empathy, emotional regulation, coaching, and conflict management—to complex leadership situations that require effective decision-making and relationship management.
- Integrate emotional intelligence principles with The Leadership Challenge® to strengthen organizational culture, improve employee engagement, and enhance team performance.

AI for Business

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is at the forefront of today's technological revolution. The session combines AI-in-business knowledge with hands-on skills to help frontline leaders understand the technological foundations of AI technologies and identify opportunities and challenges that AI presents for businesses and society at large.

Learning Objectives

- Develop an understanding of AI and gain hands-on experience with AI application within organizational contexts.
- Gain knowledge to help organizations identify opportunities for AI-enabled initiatives that improve business performance, enhance competitiveness, and create value for society.

Leading Organizational Change

This session explores the leader's role in navigating and sustaining organizational change. Participants will examine established change management frameworks, strategies for leading teams through uncertainty, and methods for building resilience and empowering teams. Emphasis will be placed on leading change across systems, influencing stakeholders, and sustaining momentum in evolving organizational environments.

Learning Objectives

Participants will evaluate change management strategies, leverage their role in organizational transformation, and develop an action plan for leading change initiatives effectively within their workplace.

Navigating Conflict and Difficult Conversations

This interactive workshop focuses on communication skills that create a framework for handling workplace conflict and difficult conversations. Participants will build confidence in diagnosing their own conflict patterns, engaging in dialogues, and maintaining composure when faced with confrontation to strengthen accountability and outcomes. Role play and discussion will provide opportunities to practice frameworks for addressing performance, behavior, and relationship issues.

Learning Objectives

- Participants will build skills in leading difficult conversations.
- Participants will apply practical strategies for addressing challenging behaviors.

Strategic Negotiation and Adaptive Communication

Successful leaders know that effective communication is more than just delivering a message, it's about understanding people, navigating challenges, and building meaningful relationships. This interactive session will explore strategic negotiation techniques and adaptive communication styles to help participants communicate with confidence, influence outcomes, and create win-win solutions. Whether you're leading a team, managing conflict, or negotiating opportunities, you'll leave with practical tools you can immediately apply in both your professional and personal life.

Learning Objectives

- Identify key negotiation strategies that foster collaboration, resolve conflict, and create mutually beneficial outcomes.
- Apply adaptive communication techniques to effectively engage with individuals who have different communication styles, personalities, and perspectives.
- Demonstrate active listening, questioning, and persuasion skills to strengthen relationships and improve decision-making during negotiations.
- Develop a personalized approach to navigating challenging conversations with confidence, professionalism, and emotional intelligence.

Lifelong Learning as Leadership: Information Literacy as Professional Development

We're drowning in information and starving for good judgment. In this session, participants will explore information literacy and professional literacy not as leftover "research skills" from school, but as a path for leadership and professional growth. We'll walk through a simple process for meeting a professional information need, from recognizing the gap to applying what you find, so "keep learning" becomes something you do, not just something you believe in. Lifelong learning is a mindset you practice consistently to keep you competitive in a workplace where the shelf-life of "what you know" keeps getting shorter.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, attendees/learners will:

- Identify what constitutes accurate, applicable information for their field and their own professional values.
- Outline a repeatable process for identifying and responding to a professional information need.
- Identify two concrete ways to integrate that process into their ongoing professional growth over the next 3-6 months.

Cultural Intelligence and Global Leadership

This interactive session for experienced leaders focuses on applying cultural intelligence in everyday leadership practice rather than simply building awareness. Using Cultural Intelligence (CQ) as the umbrella framework, participants will use Hofstede's cultural dimensions to analyze how values and assumptions shape workplace interactions and will add two practical lenses from Erin Meyer's *The Culture Map*—feedback and trust—to strengthen cross-cultural leadership decisions, communication, and team effectiveness. Through discussion, reflection, and case-based application, participants will examine how unspoken norms influence collaboration across national, generational, professional, organizational, and departmental cultures and identify concrete strategies for leading across difference with greater clarity, curiosity, and responsiveness.

Learning Objectives

- Analyze how cultural dimensions can shape workplace interactions, expectations, and misunderstandings.
- Apply culturally responsive leadership strategies to situations involving diverse teams and differing workplace norms.
- Use Hofstede's dimensions and Meyer's feedback and trust scales as diagnostic tools for interpreting leadership challenges and choosing effective responses.
- Strengthen their capacity to lead across difference with greater flexibility, authenticity, and cultural intelligence.

Six Thinking Hats: A Strategic Tool for Experienced Leaders

This session equips experienced leaders with Edward de Bono's Six Thinking Hats method as a structured tool for professional applications such as building strategic plans and conducting performance reviews. This session introduces the method as a rigor-and-fairness tool — one that helps leaders separate data from judgment, surface blind spots, and ensure that strategic decisions and evaluations of supervisees are thorough rather than driven by whichever mode of thinking (optimism, caution, gut instinct) happens to dominate in the moment.

Participants will work through the function of each hat, then apply the method directly to two realistic leadership tasks. The session includes a facilitated case walkthrough, an application exercise, and an individual practice run using an actual upcoming performance review or strategic decision from the participant's own role.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Apply the Six Thinking Hats to structure a professional decision-making process, using the sequence to ensure a plan or judgment is evaluated for facts, risks, benefits, and creative alternatives before commitment — rather than defaulting to a single dominant perspective (e.g., only risk, or only opportunity).
- Use the Six Thinking Hats framework to prepare for and deliver more balanced, evidence-based professional judgments, separating observable facts from emotional reactions and critical concerns from constructive possibilities to communicate decisions or feedback that is thorough, fair, and actionable.

Fostering Effective Workplace Cultures

Leaders set the tone for their teams and shape their teams' ability to achieve organizational goals. In this session, experienced leaders will examine how their professional presence, daily decisions, and responses to performance and behavior concerns influence workplace culture. Participants will refine strategies for strengthening accountability and addressing issues in ways that support both employees and organizational outcomes.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Analyze how their professional presence and daily leadership decisions influence workplace culture.
- Apply strategies that strengthen accountability and reinforce effective workplace norms.
- Respond to performance and behavior concerns in ways that support employees and organizational outcomes.

Leading High-Performing Teams

When experienced leaders encounter a team that is not producing the desired results, the instinct is often to focus first on individual performance. Yet many team performance problems originate elsewhere: unclear priorities, overlapping responsibilities, decision bottlenecks, poorly defined interdependencies, unnecessary work, or excessive dependence on the leader.

This advanced program takes a deep dive into team performance architecture—the structures and operating conditions that enable capable people to consistently produce strong collective results. Participants will learn a disciplined method for diagnosing team performance before intervening. Using realistic cases and their own teams, leaders will examine how clarity of outcomes, ownership, decision rights, interdependencies, and operating rhythms affect execution. The goal is not to cover every dimension of team leadership, but to strengthen one advanced leadership capability: designing the conditions in which high performance can occur.

Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Distinguish individual performance problems from team-system performance problems.
- Diagnose structural barriers that inhibit team execution.
- Clarify outcomes, ownership, decision rights, and critical interdependencies.
- Identify leadership practices that unintentionally create bottlenecks or dependency.
- Redesign one element of their team's performance architecture to improve execution.

Shaping and Sustaining Workplace Culture

Shaping and sustaining workplace culture is a professional development opportunity to equip seasoned leaders with the tools needed to build, transform, and maintain a highly collaborative and high-performing organizational culture. Rather than viewing workplace culture as a set of rules, this workshop treats it as a dynamic, strategic asset that drives employee engagement, psychological safety, and sustainable business performance.

Learning Objectives

- Examining your leadership role and how it impacts company culture
- Diagnose and map your current workplace culture
- How managers can architect a highly productive culture of belonging
- Distinguish the difference between management and inclusive leadership
- Operationalize psychological safety
- Implementing long-term sustainability measures and accountability plan

Executive Communication and Collaborative Leadership

Experienced leaders are frequently responsible for moving important work forward across organizational boundaries where priorities, perspectives, and responsibilities differ—and where positional authority may be limited. In these environments, effective communication is not simply about delivering a clear message; it is about creating alignment. This advanced program focuses specifically on communication as a tool for organizational alignment and coordinated action. Participants will learn and practice a structured approach for framing complex issues, engaging the right stakeholders, communicating decisions and implications, establishing shared ownership, and translating discussion into action.

Rather than broadly addressing communication styles, presentation skills, conflict, negotiation, or executive presence, the program takes a deep dive into one essential senior-leadership challenge: using communication to align people who must work together to achieve an organizational outcome.

Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Diagnose where and why alignment is breaking down around an organizational priority or initiative.
- Frame complex issues so stakeholders understand the organizational significance, not simply the operational details.
- Distinguish among communication intended to consult, align, decide, and mobilize.
- Structure leadership conversations that move stakeholders from differing perspectives toward shared direction.
- Translate alignment into explicit decisions, ownership, dependencies, and next actions.

Leading Through Toxicity: Strategies for Addressing Difficult Workplace Behaviors and Protecting Team Performance

Toxic workplace behaviors can significantly undermine employee well-being, collaboration, and organizational effectiveness. Leaders are often expected to navigate difficult personalities while maintaining accountability, psychological safety, and team performance. This advanced session explores the characteristics and consequences of workplace toxicity, including incivility, bullying, passive-aggressive behaviors, manipulation, and chronic negativity. Participants will examine the leadership skills necessary to address toxic behaviors through timely intervention, effective communication, professional boundaries, and appropriate documentation. Using interactive case studies, attendees will analyze complex workplace scenarios involving toxic employees and practice evidence-informed approaches for conflict resolution, coaching, progressive accountability, and organizational decision-making. The session also highlights the role of organizational culture, human resources partnerships, and leadership responsibility in preventing toxicity and fostering healthy, high-performing teams. Participants will leave with practical strategies to manage challenging workplace dynamics while preserving trust, engagement, and organizational effectiveness.

Learning Objectives

By the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Analyze the impact of toxic workplace behaviors on employee well-being, team functioning, organizational culture, and overall performance.
- Apply leadership strategies—including effective communication, boundary setting, documentation, coaching, and conflict management—to address toxic employee behaviors while maintaining professionalism.
- Evaluate complex workplace case studies to determine appropriate leadership responses and organizational interventions that protect psychological safety, strengthen team performance, and promote a healthy workplace culture.

Executive Presence & Strategic Personal Branding: Leveraging Performance, Image & Exposure (PIE)

Building a successful career requires more than doing great work, it also requires understanding how you are perceived and ensuring the right people recognize your value. Using PIE Theory—Performance, Image, and Exposure - as the framework, this interactive session helps participants examine how they perform, how they show up, and how they strategically build visibility and relationships within an organization. Participants will build on and explore their personal brand and executive presence through communication, body language, storytelling, networking, and professional relationships while reflecting on how their individual contributions create organizational impact. The session moves beyond the mindset of “What is my brand?” toward “How do I intentionally grow my brand, strengthen my leadership presence, and demonstrate the value and impact I bring to others and the organization?”

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Apply the PIE framework to assess how Performance, Image, and Exposure influence personal brand, professional reputation, and career growth.
- Evaluate their executive presence by examining how communication, body language, credibility, confidence, and professional behaviors influence how others experience them as a leader.
- Identify next steps for intentional brand growth by strengthening professional visibility, relationships, networks, and opportunities to demonstrate leadership and organizational impact.

Leadership Foundations Wrap-Up

This culminating seminar brings together the full arc of learning from the Frontline Leadership program. Participants will revisit the core concepts, tools, and mindsets explored throughout the course — from emotional intelligence and communication to strategic thinking, belonging, and professional presence — and examine how these elements now fit together as a personal leadership framework.

Through guided reflection, collaborative discussion, and future focused exercises, students will identify the shifts they’ve made, the strengths they’ve sharpened, and the habits they want to carry forward. The session emphasizes practical integration: how to apply the program’s insights to real workplace challenges, how to sustain momentum after the program ends, and how to continue growing as a leader in evolving professional

Learning Objectives

Students will leave with a clear sense of their leadership identity, a personalized action plan for the next phase of their development, and renewed confidence in their ability to influence, connect, and lead with intention.

Self-Paced Modules

Each student is required to complete four hours of asynchronous self-paced modules. Asynchronous means the learning takes place at a time that is convenient to you - it's not on a specific schedule. Students must indicate within the first week which self-paced modules they will be taking.

At the completion of the module, you will need to download a Certificate of Completion, which verifies that you successfully finished the module. Please email Certificates to mabaker@ship.edu.

Introduction to Data Analytics

3 Hours

This data analytics for beginners is designed to offer a solid foundation for working with various types of data, data visualization for decision making, and data analytics in different sectors. This program is ideal for anyone looking to become a data analyst or analytics manager. Learn data analytics and data science methodologies through this program and drive better business decisions.

<https://www.simplilearn.com/learn-data-analytics-for-beginners-skillup>

Professional Employable Skills

30 - 60 minutes each

Choose from several Professional Skills course options and take up to four hours covering a variety of topics such as team building, customer service, listening skills, and communication in the workplace. Create an account and get started today! <https://www.prologis.com/learningacademy/registration> or sign in with existing account, or <https://learningacademy.prologis.com/learn/signin> Enter "None" for the program code.

Leading with Emotional Intelligence

6 hours

This course is designed to help professionals navigate the complex waters of emotional intelligence (EI) in our professional lives. In this course, you will gain an understanding of EI in relation to yourself, others, and how to navigate different environments from an EI perspective.

To register, please contact Mary Angela Baker (mabaker@ship.edu) and she will have the access link sent to you.

Self-Paced Modules (con't)

LinkedIn Learning

The LinkedIn Learning time commitments vary. Please consult the course descriptions to determine the length of the course.

LinkedIn Learning is an online education platform offering thousands of expert-led video courses to help individuals and organizations build professional, technical, and creative skills. It's integrated with LinkedIn, so learners can showcase completed courses and certifications directly on their profiles.

To register, please contact Mary Angela Baker (mabaker@ship.edu) and she will have the access link sent to you.

Overall Program Success Indicators

Learners will be able to describe their leadership style and approach, communicate effectively in multiple forms and situations, show an increased aptitude for common business functions, and a commitment to eliminating biases and actively encouraging equity in the workplace.

Upon completion Frontline leaders will be more confident with greater abilities to solve problems on their own and teach and train others.

Through the various sessions, learners will be able to demonstrate greater understanding of their role in the business. They should also demonstrate a desire for further learning and training, as the program will foster a commitment to lifelong learning and a pathway to further education.

Program Resource Page

All documents from the Thursday sessions, including PowerPoint slide decks, pre-readings and additional resources, are available at the following website:

<https://www.ship.edu/office-of-workforce-development/private/frontline-leadership-resources-for-all-experienced-leaders/>

Session Evaluations

After each session learners will be asked to complete an evaluation. The questions each time will be:

Open-Ended Questions

1. What is the most valuable thing you learned in this session?
2. What did you learn today that will help you in pursuing a promotion or enhancing your current position?
3. What is one action you will take because of this session?
4. What is one suggestion for improving this session?
5. Please feel free to share any additional feedback

On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being Very Much Agree, and 1 being Very Much Disagree:

1. The instructor is well prepared and understands the subject matter.
2. The instructor is engaging and encouraged student participation during the session.
3. I feel I now have a better understanding of this session's subject.
4. I am confident I can apply what I learned in this session in the workplace during the next three weeks.
5. On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being Very Valuable, and 1 being Not at All Valuable: Overall, rate how valuable the content of this session is to your career success.

Zoom

We will be using Zoom for all our online meetings. Zoom is a web conferencing platform that is used for audio and/or video conferencing. There are many different resources available to learn how to use the Zoom features, both in YouTube videos and websites. You can find them by searching: How to Use Zoom.

Zoom is updated frequently; be sure to check the posting date of any resources to ensure you have recent information.

Zoom Meeting Etiquette for Students

Join the Meeting Early

You should join early so you can test your technology and be ready when the session begins.

Check your Camera and Microphone

Turn your camera and mic on. Meeting virtually is no different from meeting face-to-face. People want to see and hear you while at work.

Remember You are Always on Camera

Use a work appropriate background which can include a virtual background. Ensure you have adequate lighting and your face is well lit and not in shadows.

Look at the Camera when Speaking

Just like you would look people in the eye during a face-to-face meeting, look at the camera when you are speaking.

Find Your Strongest Internet Connection

If possible, connect to your hardwired internet. Try to have the most reliable internet connection.

Eliminate Distractions

Turn off email notifications, put your cell phone on silent, put a sign on the door, and, if at home, put pets in another safe place.

Stay on Mute if You're Not Talking

Background noise can be distracting. If you aren't sharing anything at the moment, you should remain on mute until talking or presenting. Before you speak, make sure your mic is unmuted.

Be Respectful – Raise Your Hand

If you want to speak, physically raise your hand or use the “raise hand” feature that is available in the participant panel.

Use Chat

Chat can be used for questions and comments about the presentation and as a way to share other resources. Note that the chat will be saved each session.

Don't Eat During the Meeting

It can be distracting to watch other people eat. Try to hold off on eating if you can, or if not, consider briefly turning off the video and audio until you are done eating.

Dress Appropriately

It is crucial to remain professional and dress appropriately. Wear something similar to what you would typically wear to work.

Instructor Bios

Dr. Viet T. Dao

Professor of
Information
Systems and
Analytics

Shippensburg
University

VTDao@ship.edu

Viet T. Dao (Ph.D., University of Oklahoma) is a Professor of Information Systems and Analytics (ISA) at the John L. Grove College of Business, Shippensburg University. He served as Chair of the Accounting and ISA department at Shippensburg University for five years.

His primary research interests focus on how organizations manage information systems and technological innovations, including digital and artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, to deliver business and sustainability value.

Dr. Dao has more than 24 years of extensive teaching experience at undergraduate and graduate levels at Shippensburg University and the University of Oklahoma. He has also collaborated with multiple organizations on research projects and management training workshops. In recognition of his teaching excellence, he has received multiple institutional and national awards for innovative teaching.

Ms. Jody Fernando

Instructional Technology
Specialist, Writer, and
Educational Trainer

jfernando.jobs@gmail.com

Jody Fernando, MEd, MA, is an educator, trainer, and instructional designer with more than 25 years of experience working in globally focused and cross-cultural contexts. Her background includes teaching in educational settings, including ESL instruction and Spanish language teaching, which informs her approach to communication, inclusion, and leadership across difference. She has designed and facilitated learning across K–12, higher education, adult learning, and professional development, creating engaging, people-centered curriculum and training that helps learners turn complex ideas into practical action.

Ms. Victoria M. Kerr

Executive Director

Career Center

Shippensburg University

VMBuchbauer@ship.edu

Victoria Kerr, MA, is the Executive Director of the Career Center at Shippensburg University. Since starting at Shippensburg University in 2013, Victoria loves developing new and innovative programs designed to assist students in reaching their academic and career goals. She is passionate about connecting students to their purpose and developing those interests, skills, and abilities into a successful career path.

Previous to Shippensburg University, she served as the Director of the Career Center/Undeclared Students at Shepherd University and held roles within Human Resources for over 8 years at the American Bar Association, American Woodmark, and ATPCO. Victoria holds a Master of Arts in College Student Development from Shepherd University and a Bachelor of Arts in Law and Society from American University. She is a Gallup-Certified Strengths Coach, certified in DiSC, STRONG Interest & Myers-Briggs Inventory, and recently obtained her Certified Career Services Provider (CCSP).

Instructor Bios

Dr. Wendy Kubasko

Program Chair and
Associate Professor,
Educational Leadership
Department

Shippensburg University

WLKubasko@ship.edu

Wendy Kubasko, Ed.D. brings over twenty-five years of experience in public education. She earned her undergraduate degree from Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania. Beginning her career outside of Washington, D.C., Dr. Kubasko chose to work with underserved populations. She moved to Phoenix, Arizona teaching middle and elementary schools in Title I school districts. She earned her Master's in Curriculum and Instruction in Mathematics at Arizona State University.

After years in the classroom, Dr. Kubasko moved into district support roles, first as a professional development coordinator, then as a Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Administrator for Academic Services, and finally, the Assistant Superintendent for Avondale Elementary School District.

In 2015, Dr. Kubasko received her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Innovation from the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. Dr. Kubasko's research centers on the use of collaborative learning for school and district leaders around common problems of practice. Currently, Dr. Kubasko is an associate professor at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania in the Educational Leadership and Special Education Department.

Dr. Kara Laskowski

Professor and
Chair, Department
of Communication
Studies

Shippensburg
University

KALask@ship.edu

Kara Laskowski (Ph.D., The Pennsylvania State University) is a Professor of Communication Studies at Shippensburg University. Prior to coming to Shippensburg, she taught at Juniata College and Penn State, University Park.

Dr. Laskowski has published on topics including naming and identity, communication competence and abuse, and workplace conflict resolution. She has studied and taught Conflict Resolution for thirty years, with an emphasis on interpersonal relationships and nonviolent resolution strategies applied to personal and professional contexts. She has lead trainings for department chairs and Deans, county and municipal employees, and student organizations. Her research also encompasses labor in higher education.

Dr. Laskowski additionally serves as Vice President of the Association of Pennsylvania State Colleges and Universities. A Pennsylvania native, she enjoys gardening, her adult children, kayaking, and hiking with her two rescue dogs.

Instructor Bios

Dr. Tammy Manko

Speaker & Trainer

MeaningfulLife, LLC

Instagram &

Twitter/X:

@TPManko

meaningfullifetpm@gmail.com

As the founder and owner of MeaningfulLife, LLC, Tammy Manko, Ed.D., brings decades of experience in higher education, leadership, career development, and professional training to her work as a speaker, facilitator, and consultant. A former university career center executive and award-winning higher education professional, Tammy is passionate about helping individuals and organizations strengthen the skills and behaviors that contribute to professional and personal success.

Her areas of expertise include executive presence, communication and body language, professional networking and relationship building, teamwork and leadership, career readiness, workplace etiquette, positivity, change management, customer service, and professional development.

Tammy holds a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership, a master's degree in Student Affairs in Higher Education, and a bachelor's degree in English. A lifelong learner, she enjoys reading, discovering new ideas, and—most importantly—sharing what she learns in practical and meaningful ways that others can use.

Outside of her professional work, Tammy enjoys spending time with family and friends, traveling whenever she can, meeting new people, and finding opportunities to connect, learn, and engage with others.

Ms. Nicole McCartan

nicolelmccartan@gmail.com

Nicole McCartan, MBA, is a highly motivated and ambitious professional with a diverse background in Project Management, Marketing, Direct Sales/Sales, and Education. Her educational achievements include being ABD (All But Dissertation) in Psychology, with a concentration in Sociology. She holds a Master of Business Administration degree with a concentration in Marketing and a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Relations and Marketing. Nicole has been in an array of industries and worked in several markets. With her extensive knowledge and expertise, Nicole seeks to make a difference by equipping others with the tools and guidance they need to thrive. Her passion lies in enabling individuals to tap into their innate abilities and unleash their full potential. Through her leadership and motivational skills, she aims to inspire and uplift others, helping them chart their own path to success.

Instructor Bios

Mrs. Tracy Montoro Director of Workforce Development	Tracy Montoro, M.S., leads Workforce Development at Shippensburg University, where she teams up with regional employers and faculty to bring real, useful professional development to the local workforce. With over 26 years in education — split between the classroom and administration — she's seen the field from just about every angle.
Shippensburg University TLMontoro@ship.edu	Before stepping into workforce development, Tracy spent years as Associate Director of the Career Centers at both Shippensburg and Dickinson College, helping students and alumni figure out their next moves and build careers they were excited about. She holds a bachelor's in Elementary Education and a master's in Counseling, both from Shippensburg University, and enjoys her work as a certified Six Thinking Hats training provider.
Dr. Manuel Ruiz Assistant Vice President for Inclusion, Belonging, and Director of Social Equity Shippensburg University MRuiz@ship.edu	Manuel Ruiz, Ed.D., currently serves as Assistant Vice President for Inclusion, Belonging, and Social Equity at Shippensburg University. He has worked in higher education for 23 years in a variety of roles and is a proud first-generation college graduate. Dr. Ruiz is actively involved within the PA State System of Higher Education (currently serving as an SLG Co-Lead for the state systems Chief Diversity Officers) and the American College Personnel Student Association. Dr. Ruiz has also taught at the undergraduate and graduate level.
Dr. Matthew Shupp Professor of Counselor Education Shippensburg University MRShupp@ship.edu	Matthew R. Shupp, Ed.D., is a Professor in the Department of Counselor Education at Shippensburg University where he developed and teaches a course on Emotionally Intelligent Leadership. Prior to his role as faculty, Dr. Shupp was a student affairs professional in a variety of institutional settings. He is both a National Certified Counselor (NCC) through the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) as well as a Board Certified Tele-Mental Health Provider (BC-TMH). He is an Approved Clinical Supervisor (ACS) and licensed as a professional counselor (LPC) in the state of Pennsylvania.

Instructor Bios

Ms. Josefine Smith

Associate Professor,
Instruction &
Assessment
Librarian

Shippensburg
University

JMSmith@ship.edu

Josefine Smith, MLIS, MA, is an associate professor and the Instruction & Assessment Librarian at Shippensburg University. She earned her undergraduate and first master's from University of Pittsburgh. She also has a MA from Penn State, Harrisburg in American Studies and is finishing a MS in Clinical Mental Health.

She has worked in research support, instruction, and government documents. Her research interests are exploring ways that information literacy instruction can enhance student success and student empowerment and how libraries can better communicate their value. She loves working with students to help them connect with their passions and grow into successful professionals.

Mr. Tom Templeton

Founder and Creative
Director

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Tom Templeton, BS, Founder and Creative Director of Templeton Advantage, LLC, provides governance, leadership, executive search, and coaching services to individuals and organizations. His career includes 12 years with U.S. Representative George W. Gekas, where he ultimately served as District Director, followed by leadership roles with the Pennsylvania School Boards Association, including Assistant Executive Director for School Board and Management Services.

Today, Tom leads leadership workshops and retreats, conducts executive searches, and coaches aspiring and experienced leaders. He combines research, practical strategies, leadership principles, and core values to help leaders translate insight into action. Tom holds a bachelor's degree from Millersville University and an education certification from Penn State Harrisburg.

Ms. Estevanny
Jiménez Turns

Consultant

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Estevanny Jiménez Turns, MBA, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, is a human resources strategist, consultant, and leadership facilitator with more than 20 years of experience helping organizations build people-centered cultures that deliver results. She has led human resources, organizational development, employee engagement, and diversity, equity, inclusion, and access initiatives in educational organizations. Today, she helps leaders strengthen workplace culture, develop their teams, and create the conditions for people and organizations to thrive.