

# Leadership by Design: Harnessing the Power of Learning for New Managers

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For supervisors, team leaders, and managers who want to build  
the learning habits great managers rely on

A practical and interactive online course



# Welcome to the Course

**S**tepping into a leadership role is exciting, but also full of new challenges. As a new manager, there will be many new things for you to learn. Being able to learn effectively is therefore crucial. That's where this course comes in.

In **Leadership by Design**, you'll explore how to build learning habits that fit into your busy schedule, develop practical learning skills that stick, and overcome common barriers that slow down professional growth.

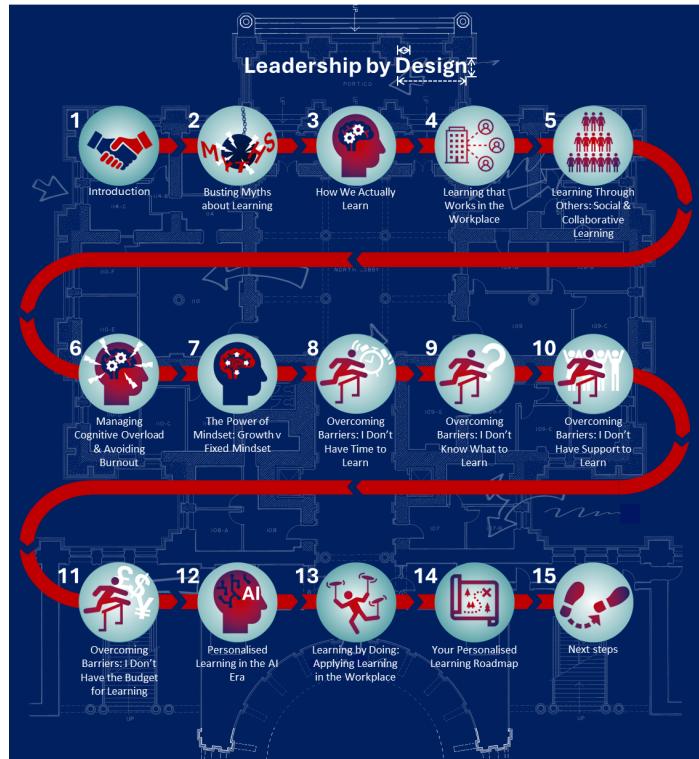
Here's what you can expect:

 **Smarter Learning Strategies** – Discover how your brain works and how to use that knowledge to grow faster.

 **Overcoming Common Barriers** – Learn how to manage time, focus on what really matters, and stay motivated.

 **Real-World Application** – Engage in activities that connect directly to your leadership role, so you can put learning into action immediately.

The course combines short, punchy videos covering the core content with scenario-based quizzes so that you can practice applying your learning to real-world situations.



Alongside this, the course includes a range of explainer documents providing additional information on areas you may want to dive into. It also has a range of tools designed to help you apply the things that you learn in the course. These tools combine to provide a full suite of practical learning support for the new manager.

Once you have completed the course you will also gain access to the *Tom Woodward Learning Partner*\*, an AI tool designed to support you to apply what you have learnt with coaching-style prompts, feedback on real-world application, SMART goal-setting, and much more. You can ask for help with specific challenges, revisit course concepts, or just check in.

We look forward to seeing you on the course soon.

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- 1 Recognise and overcome barriers to learning.
- 2 Apply evidence-based learning techniques in the flow of work.
- 3 Integrate continuous learning into everyday leadership practice.
- 4 Use a growth mindset to adapt to new learning opportunities.
- 5 Manage time and prioritise learning while handling job responsibilities.
- 6 Engage in self-reflection and apply insights from experiences to improve leadership.
- 7 Apply personalised learning strategies based on specific challenges and goals.

## SCIENCE OF LEARNING

Welcome to the Course

Busting Myths About Learning

How We Actually Learn

Learning That Works in the Workplace

Learning Through Others: Social & Collaborative Learning

Managing Cognitive Overload & Avoiding Burnout

The Power of Mindset: Growth v Fixed Mindset

I Don't Have Time to Learn

I Don't Know What to Learn

I Don't Have Support to Learn

I Don't Have the Budget for Learning

Personalised Learning in the AI Era

Learning by Doing: Applying Learning in the Workplace

Your Personalised Learning Roadmap

Next Steps

## BARRIERS TO LEARNING



# MYTHBUSTING

## Are you ready to make the call?

Before you can learn effectively as a leader, you need to know what **doesn't** work. In this section, we cut through the clutter of outdated learning myths, like the idea that you're stuck with one 'learning style' or that it takes 10,000 hours to master a skill. Spoiler alert: neither is true.

In this section, we shine a light on some of the most widespread and misleading beliefs about learning and explain why they can hold you back. You'll uncover what really helps the brain absorb and retain information, and why common shortcuts often don't work.

Through video, examples, and practical reflection, you'll challenge your own assumptions and start to see learning in a new light, one that's more flexible, achievable, and motivating.

By the end of this section, you'll be able to spot (and dodge) unhelpful assumptions so that you are better placed to adopt smarter learning strategies that put you on a confident path to growth.

# Busting Myths About Learning

## Learning objectives

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ▲ **Debunk common learning myths** to adopt more effective learning strategies
- ▲ **Challenge misconceptions** that limit personal and professional growth
- ▲ **Make informed learning choices** that lead to faster and more effective skill mastery

## Block features



Video



Interactive Quizzes





Photo by Freepik

# The science of smarter learning

In this section we crack open the secrets of how the brain learns — because when you understand how learning **really** works, you can use it to your advantage.

This section dives into the neuroscience behind leadership development, showing you how memory, focus, motivation, and emotions all play a role in retaining and applying new skills. You'll learn about neuroplasticity (how your brain rewires itself), and how practical tools like spaced repetition, active learning, and retrieval practice can make your learning stick.

The best part? These aren't abstract theories. You'll discover how to apply them to real-world leadership challenges so you can learn faster, lead smarter, and build confidence as a manager. It's like getting a user manual for your brain, only way more fun!

# How We Actually Learn

## Learning objectives

In this section you will discover:

- ▲ **How memory works:** From **short-term** to **long-term memory**, and how to move information between them
- ▲ **The importance of neural connections:** How learning creates pathways in your brain, and why practice makes perfect
- ▲ **What motivates our learning:** How emotions, engagement, and effort can affect how much we retain and recall
- ▲ **The science behind effective learning techniques:** We'll introduce you to **spaced repetition**, **retrieval practice**, and **active learning**

## Block features

-  Video
-  Interactive Quizzes
-  Downloadable Resources
-  Tools





# Making learning happen

Now that you know **how** learning happens, it's time to put it to work. This section is all about turning science into strategy, taking what you've learned about the brain and applying it to your real-life role as a new manager.

You'll explore how to embed learning into your day-to-day tasks, meetings, and decision-making moments, without needing hours of extra time.

We'll show you how to use practical techniques like focused attention, active learning, spaced repetition, and habit-stacking to grow your leadership skills, even on your busiest days.

You'll also discover how to balance learning with leading, so that development doesn't feel like an extra burden, but a natural part of how you show up at work.

This section is packed with tips, tools, and mini-challenges to help you build powerful, brain-friendly learning habits that fit your schedule and stick for the long term.

# Learning That Works in the Workplace

## Learning objectives

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ▲ **Harness the power of focus** to improve your learning and develop leadership behaviours, by reducing distractions, engaging your brain's attention network, and practicing intentional, focused learning
- ▲ **Apply active learning techniques** like **spaced repetition** and **retrieval practice** to strengthen your leadership skills
- ▲ **Integrate learning into your busy schedule** with small, consistent actions that lead to long-term growth
- ▲ **Balance learning new skills with leading your team**, so you can continue to grow as a manager without feeling overwhelmed

## Block features



Interactive Quizzes



Tools





# Learn, lead, and grow together

Leadership can feel like a solo sport, but it shouldn't. In this section, we dive into the power of social and collaborative learning.

You'll discover how some of your best leadership development doesn't come from courses or books, but from conversations, feedback, and shared experiences. Whether it's learning from a peer, receiving thoughtful feedback, or getting guidance from a mentor, this section helps you tap into the network around you to grow faster and more confidently.

You'll learn how to build learning partnerships, find mentors and/or coaches, and collaborate with others in ways that supports continuous improvement.

With real examples and practical action planning, this section will show you that leadership isn't just about what you know, it's about how you learn and grow **with** others

# Learning Through Others: Social & Collaborative Learning

## Learning objectives

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ▲ Leverage **peer learning** to grow your leadership skills through discussions, feedback, and shared experiences
- ▲ Use **mentoring and coaching** relationships to accelerate your development and support others
- ▲ Engage in **collaborative problem-solving**, so you can learn in real time from colleagues and team members

## Block features

	Video
	Downloadable Resources
	Tools

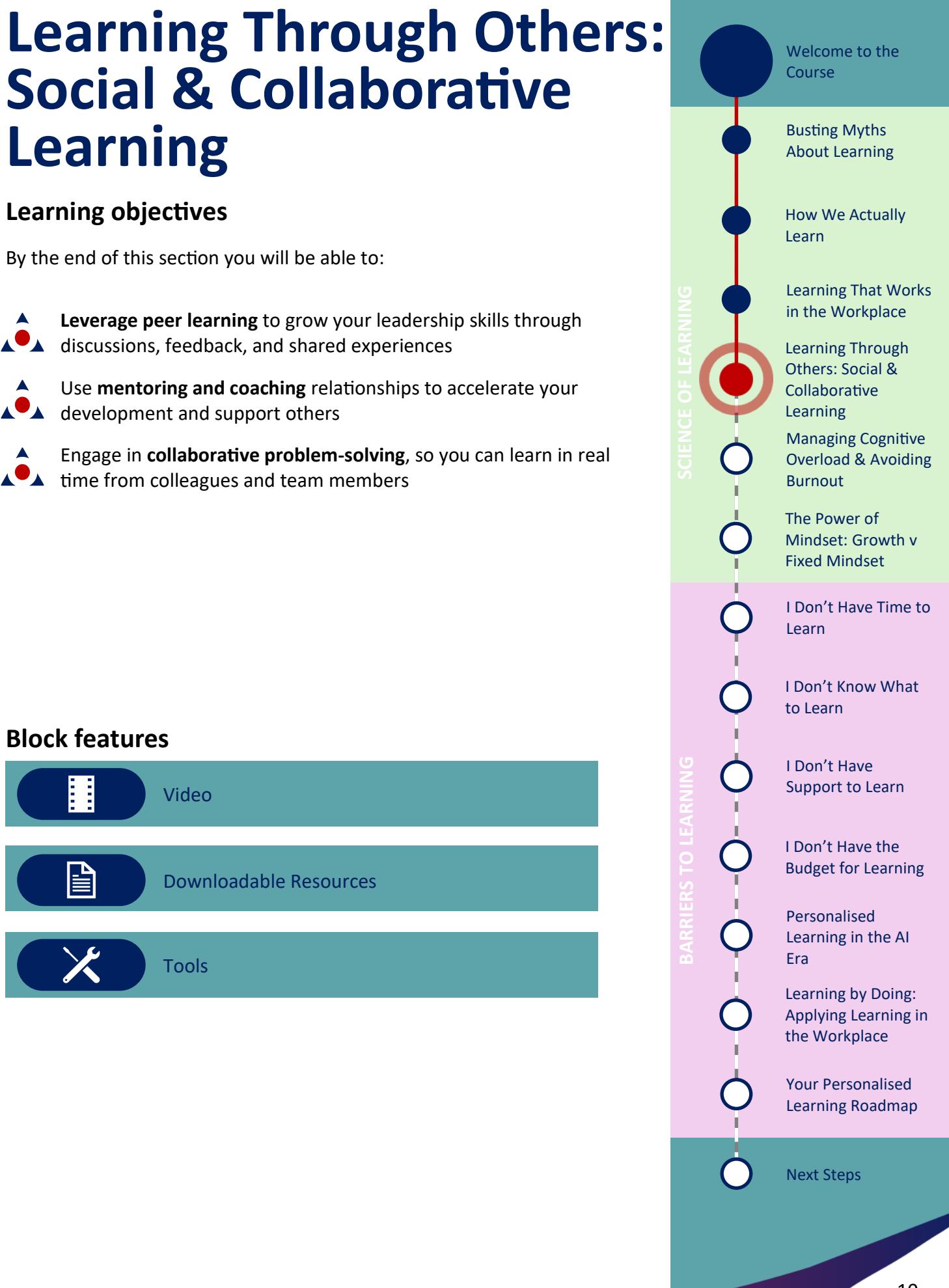




Photo by Tara Winstead

# Clear mind, better learning

Leadership can be mentally demanding, especially when everything feels urgent and your brain won't slow down. In this section, we tackle one of the biggest barriers to learning and leading effectively: cognitive overload.

You'll explore the science behind why your brain struggles under pressure, and what to do about it.

Through engaging activities and evidence-backed strategies, you'll learn how to spot the warning signs of overwhelm, prioritise better, and create space to think clearly. We'll cover brain-friendly techniques to manage information, make smarter decisions, and avoid burnout, even in the busiest weeks.

You'll also build a personal action plan to help you balance learning and leadership without sacrificing your wellbeing. This section is your toolkit for sustainable growth, because great leaders need energy, not exhaustion.

# Managing Cognitive Overload & Avoiding Burnout

## Learning objectives

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ▲ Recognise and **minimise cognitive overload to improve decision-making and focus**
- ▲ Implement **cognitive load management techniques** to process information efficiently
- ▲ Apply strategies to **prevent burnout and maintain sustainable learning habits**
- ▲ Use brain-friendly learning techniques to **retain and apply knowledge effectively**
- ▲ Develop and follow a **personal action plan** to balance learning and leadership responsibilities

## Block features

	Video
	Interactive Quizzes
	Downloadable Resources





# The hidden key to growth

What really separates good managers from great leaders? It's not talent or experience, it's mindset. In this section, we explore how your beliefs about learning and ability shape your success.

You'll discover the powerful difference between a fixed mindset (which says 'I can't') and a growth mindset (which says 'I can learn').

This section unpacks how your brain can rewire itself through challenge, practice, and reflection, and how to tap into that ability to grow as a leader.

You'll learn how to reframe setbacks, embrace feedback, and build your resilience, even when things don't go to plan. You'll also explore how to spot mindset traps in yourself and your team, and how to create a leadership environment that supports continuous growth.

This isn't just feel-good psychology, it's a practical shift in thinking that can change how you lead, learn, and succeed

# The Power of Mindset: Growth v Fixed Mindset

## Learning objectives

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ▲ Identify and challenge fixed mindset thoughts to build a more adaptive learning approach
- ▲ Apply growth mindset strategies to overcome setbacks and improve leadership skills
- ▲ Encourage a growth mindset in others by providing constructive feedback and support
- ▲ Use self-reflection techniques to shift limiting beliefs and embrace continuous learning
- ▲ Develop a personal action plan to strengthen resilience and adaptability as a leader

## Block features



Interactive Quizzes



Downloadable Resources



Tools





## No time to learn? Think again.

'I just don't have time to learn.'

Sound familiar? This section takes on one of the biggest challenges in leadership development, that learning requires hours of extra time you don't have. Spoiler (again, I know): it doesn't.

This section is all about working smarter, not harder. You'll uncover hidden opportunities to learn in your daily routine: during meetings, in emails, even while making coffee (other beverages are available). Through micro-learning, habit stacking, and learning in the flow of work, you'll discover how to build skills in five-minute bursts that add up to big results.

This isn't about cramming more into your calendar; it's about using what you already do more intentionally. You'll also learn how to track your learning, reflect regularly, and make continuous progress, all without needing to carve out big chunks of time.

If you've ever felt too busy to grow as a leader, this section is your shortcut to sustainable, on-the-job development.

# I Don't Have Time to Learn

## Learning objectives

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ▲ Spot hidden learning opportunities in your schedule
- ▲ Use practical strategies like micro-learning, habit stacking, and learning in the flow of work
- ▲ Shift from passive learning (waiting for time) to **active learning** (creating time)

## Block features

-  Video
-  Interactive Quizzes
-  Downloadable Resources
-  Tools





## Find your focus and own it

With so many leadership skills to think about, how do you know where to start? Or what to tackle next? This section helps you cut through the noise so you can develop a clear, confident answer to that all-important question: **what should I learn now to grow as a leader?**

Instead of reacting to whatever's trending or what others think you 'should' develop, this section puts **you** in the driver's seat. You'll learn how to assess your current role, reflect on your ambitions, and identify the specific skills that will make the biggest difference to your work and your confidence.

We'll guide you through how to build a Personal Development Plan (PDP) that's actually useful — no fluff, no jargon — just clear goals and a simple way to track your progress.

You'll also discover how to have meaningful development conversations with your manager, and how to take ownership of your learning journey so it works for **you**.

Whether you're looking to boost your communication, sharpen your decision-making, or learn how to better support your team, this section gives you the tools to focus, plan, and grow with purpose.

# I Don't Know What to Learn

## Learning objectives

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ▲ Assess current skills and leadership challenges to **identify relevant learning priorities**
- ▲ Set clear and achievable **learning goals** aligned with professional growth needs
- ▲ Use practical frameworks to **decide what to learn next** based on impact and relevance
- ▲ Seek and apply feedback to **uncover hidden development opportunities**
- ▲ Create a **continuous learning plan** that adapts to evolving leadership demands

## Block features



Interactive Quizzes



Downloadable Resources



Tools





## Build your own learning network

What if you want to grow, but no one's guiding you? Maybe your manager doesn't prioritise development, your employer isn't big on learning, or you just don't have access to the kind of support you'd like. This section is here to help you change that. It's designed for new managers who are motivated to develop but feel stuck without encouragement or structure around them.

In this section, you'll learn how to build your own learning ecosystem, no budget or permission required. We'll explore how to seek out mentors, form peer learning groups, and tap into informal conversations that fuel your growth. You'll gain practical tools to help you create your own development opportunities, from setting up coffee chats with experienced colleagues to joining online

communities and learning from thought leaders in your field.

You'll also get guidance on how to start effective development conversations with your manager (even if they're not the coaching type) and how to ask for what you need with confidence.

Most importantly, you'll strengthen your sense of agency and motivation, learning how to stay resilient and curious even when external support is limited. Because leadership isn't about waiting, it's about stepping forward, and this section helps you do exactly that.

# I Don't Have Support to Learn

## Learning objectives

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ▲ Take ownership of your learning, even if your manager isn't involved
- ▲ Create a network of support from mentors, peers, and other leaders
- ▲ Access learning opportunities beyond your immediate team or company

## Block features

-  Video
-  Downloadable Resources
-  Tools





## No money? Learn anyway

Think you need a training budget to become a better leader? Think again. This section is your personal guide to powerful, low- and no-cost learning. It tackles another common assumption holding new managers back: that growth depends on expensive courses, paid coaching, or formal qualifications. In truth, some of the most effective leadership development happens without spending a penny.

In this section, you'll uncover the hidden learning tools already at your fingertips: your daily work experiences, team challenges, conversations, feedback, reading, mentoring, and reflection. We'll show you how to turn the workplace into your personal leadership classroom, using real-life situations to build real skills.

You'll reflect on how you've already learned without formal training, and use that insight to build a structured, no-budget learning plan.

Whether it's observing others, trial and error, or stretching yourself in new situations, this section gives you the confidence and tools to keep growing, no wallet required. Because great leaders aren't made by money, they're made by mindset, action, and commitment.

# I Don't Have the Budget for Learning

## Learning objectives

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ▲ Develop leadership skills **using free or low-cost learning methods**
- ▲ Leverage **workplace opportunities** for growth
- ▲ Create a structured, **no-budget learning plan** that keeps you moving forward

## Block features



Video

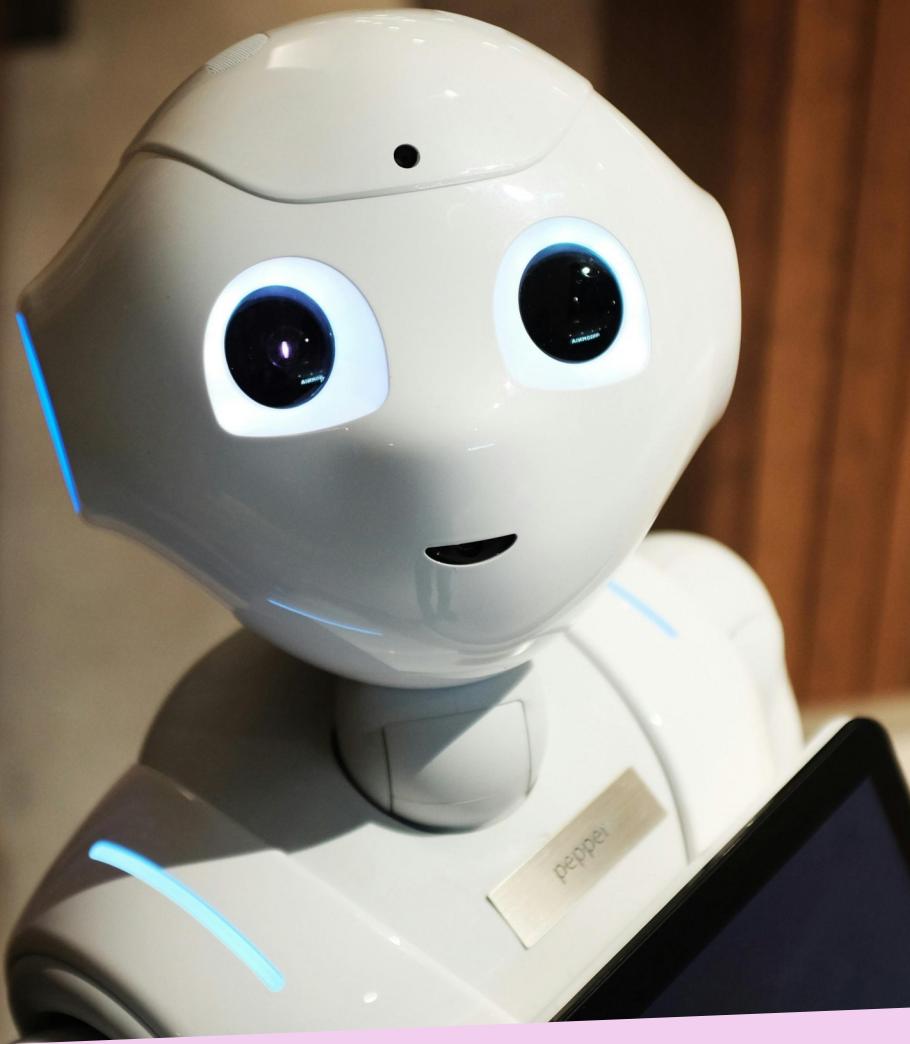


Downloadable Resources



Tools





## AI in your corner

In this section, we look at how to personalise your leadership development using one of today's most powerful tools: AI. No, it's not about robots taking over your role. It's about making your learning faster, smarter, and more relevant to **you**.

This section shows you how AI can become your always-on learning partner, helping you ask better questions, structure your reflections, and get tailored advice when you need it most. You'll learn how to prompt AI tools to act as a coach, a thinking partner, or even a learning strategist. Whether you want feedback, help framing a tough conversation, or ideas for motivating your team, AI can support you in real time.

But here's the key: it's not about blindly accepting every answer. This section reminds you to think critically, challenge AI's suggestions, and apply its insights thoughtfully in your unique workplace.

By the end, you'll know how to combine the best of AI with your own judgment, using it as a springboard, not a substitute, for stronger leadership learning.

# Personalised Learning in the AI Era

## Learning objectives

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ▲ Use AI to **personalise your leadership learning** and skill development
- ▲ **Structure AI prompts** to get relevant, practical insights
- ▲ Apply **AI-generated insights** to real workplace situations

## Block features



Video





## Learn it, live it. Insight into action

Knowledge alone doesn't make you a better leader. **using** it does. This section is where theory becomes practice. It's all about taking the learning insights, strategies, and tools you've gained throughout the course and putting them to work in the real world. Because true growth comes not from knowing more, but from **doing** more with what you know.

In this section, you'll explore how to recognise leadership moments in your everyday work: those emails, meetings, team check-ins, and tough conversations that are packed with potential for development. You'll learn how to apply new skills intentionally, reflect on what worked (and what didn't), and keep improving through feedback and real-time adjustments.

The 3-Step Process (Identify, Apply, Improve) will guide your journey from passive learning to purposeful action. You'll embed it into the Personal Development Plan you began earlier in the course and build long-term habits that make learning part of how you lead every day.

By the end of this section, leadership won't feel like something you learn **after** work, it'll be something you practice **during** it.

# Learning by Doing: Applying Learning in the Workplace

## Learning objectives

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ▲ Recognise **everyday work moments** as learning opportunities
- ▲ Experiment, reflect, and refine leadership skills through **practical application**
- ▲ Use **feedback and self-reflection** to continuously improve leadership abilities
- ▲ Build a long-term habit of **learning-by-doing**

## Block features

-  Video
-  Downloadable Resources
-  Tools





# Design your future

This section is where everything comes together. It's time to take all the insights, tools, and strategies you've gathered and turn them into a clear, structured plan for your long-term leadership development. But this isn't your standard Personal Development Plan. This is your **Personalised Learning Roadmap** — a dynamic, living document that evolves with your leadership journey.

In this section, you'll learn how to build a roadmap that goes beyond short-term goals. You'll set a vision for the kind of leader you want to become over the next three to five years, and identify the key learning themes, like influencing, strategic thinking, or leading through change, that will help

you get there. You'll mix formal learning, stretch experiences, and peer support to create a development approach that's flexible, practical, and totally you.

Most importantly, you'll set clear milestones and triggers so that your roadmap stays relevant, actionable, and motivating. It's not just a plan, it's your personal guide to growing as a leader, step by step, year after year.

# Your Personalised Learning Roadmap

## Learning objectives

By the end of this section you will be able to:

- ▲ Develop a **Personalised Learning Roadmap** tailored to your long-term leadership growth
- ▲ **Integrate multiple learning methods**, including formal training, experiential learning, and peer learning
- ▲ **Set structured milestones** to track progress and adapt learning priorities over time
- ▲ Make your roadmap a living document that **evolves with your leadership journey**

## Block features



Downloadable Resources



Tools



# Next Steps

Every one of our courses ends with a Next Steps section, and *Leadership by Design* is no exception. But unlike most leadership courses, this one isn't about passing on a fixed set of skills. It's about helping you **learn how to learn**, effectively, confidently, and on your own terms. You will be provided with a 'Takeaways' booklet that summarises all the key learning points for the course so that you have an easy reference guide to help you apply your learning.

You've already begun to shape your long-term vision and development themes. Now, we help you bring it to life. You'll reflect on your learning, explore what's shifted in how you learn, and identify actions to embed new habits in your daily work.

You'll also create your personal commitment plan, *My Commitment to Me*, a realistic, self-directed agreement to apply what you've learned. And if you choose to share it with us, we'll check in with you to see how you're getting on.

Once you have completed the course you will also gain access to *Tom Woodward Learning Partner*\*, an AI tool designed to support you to apply what you have learnt with coaching-style prompts, feedback on real-world application, SMART goal-setting, and much more. You can ask for help with specific challenges, revisit course concepts, or just check in.

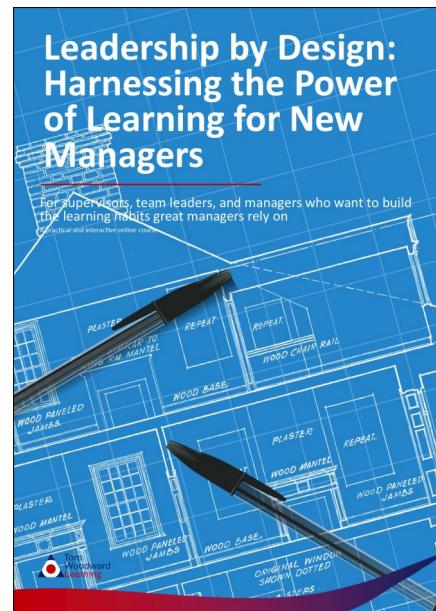
This course is only the beginning. Your leadership journey starts now.

## Have we sparked your interest?

This booklet gives you an insight into the course. If you want to find out more we have created a demo version, which includes an overview video alongside a brief extract from the course itself. This will give you an opportunity to experience a small part of the course on our learning platform. You can access the demo for free here: [Leadership by Design](#).

If you want to buy a place on the course, you can do that on our website at [Leadership by Design](#).

The course is also available via [Udemy](#).



**Next Steps — Preparation**

This document has been designed to help you put together an action plan so that you can gain the most benefit from the course that you have just completed.

Work through each section of the first page to help you gain some focus around what would be beneficial to you in terms of actions for next steps.

**Remember:** In setting these actions you are giving a commitment to your future self to complete them. This will mean you get the maximum benefit from the learning you have done.

**It's your gift to you. Don't let yourself down!**

**What have you learned on this course?**

**What feedback have you received and/or what did you notice when you reflected on this course?**

**What are the key challenges facing you and/or your business?**

**How could coaching resolve these?**

**Next Steps — My Commitment to Me**

**Actions** (In the space provided below, write at least one action that you are going to do as a consequence of completing The Alchemist e-learning course *The Power Playbook — Supercharging Your Coaching at Work*)

**Action 1**

**Action 2**

**Action 3**

**Remember to make your actions SMART**

For each action you have committed to doing, ask yourself the questions detailed below. If your answers to these questions indicate that your action is not SMART, rewrite it to make it so.

**S** Is it clear what I want to achieve?  
Will achieving this goal have an important impact?

**M** Can I tell from this action how much or how many?  
Will this enable me to tell if I have accomplished the action?

**A** Is it clear who is going to do this?  
Can I do it (do I have the right knowledge, skills, tools, resources, access, or ability)?

**R** Have I got everything I need or can I get it to achieve this action?  
Is this action aligned with my other goals, or the overarching goals of my team or business?

**T** What is the timeframe for achieving this action?  
Is it realistic (is it too short)?  
Is it too long (and so motivation may fail)?

[www.thealchemistfd.com](http://www.thealchemistfd.com)

# About Us

**Whilst others dream, we help them do.**



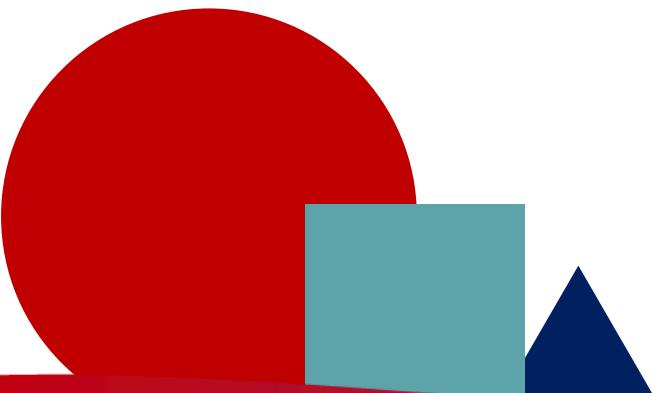
Tom Woodward Learning began in 2024, so yes, as a business it's only a baby.

Our founder, having worked for various large organisations throughout his 30+ year career, wanted to bring the quality learning and development solutions that these businesses took for granted to the small business owner, where pricing and availability could often be a barrier.

By 'democratising' access to the kind of learning and development solutions that small businesses might not normally be able to access we hope to make a big difference to the success of small businesses, their owners, and the people who work with them everywhere. Whilst others dream, we really want to help them do.

And as a small business ourselves, we aim to bring to our service and product offering an understanding of the challenges that face the small business entrepreneur.

Tom Woodward Learning is based in Torbay, England. The beautiful English Riviera provides a fantastic backdrop as well as a source of inspiration as we reach out to wherever people feel we can make a difference for them.





*Leadership by Design: Harnessing the Power of Learning for New Managers* has been designed for new managers, supervisors, and team leaders who are eager to level up their leadership skills but may be struggling to find the time, wondering where to start, or unsure of how to turn learning into lasting change.

In this dynamic, evidence-based course, you'll learn how to harness the power of the latest scientific insights on learning to become a more effective leader. The course does not just talk theory, but includes practical, real-world strategies to integrate learning into your daily workflow and overcome the barriers that often hold new managers back.

For more information about this and the other courses that we provide, visit us at:  
[www.tomwoodwardlearning.com](http://www.tomwoodwardlearning.com)



Contact: [info@tomwoodwardlearning.com](mailto:info@tomwoodwardlearning.com)

The interweb: [www.tomwoodwardlearning.com](http://www.tomwoodwardlearning.com)