

# Management: Senior Practitioner Programme





# Developing management capability within the Civil Service

When it was announced in 2021, the Declaration of Government Reform pledged to deliver a skilled, innovative and ambitious Civil Service. Within this, there was a firm commitment to leadership and management development within government.

The Senior Practitioner programme is one of three programmes produced to equip managers with the skills they need, not just to manage their teams, but also to deliver excellent citizen outcomes and to make effective use of all available resources.

**The programme is designed specifically for senior managers at grades 6 and 7 and deputy directors. With its focus on developing line management capability within the Civil Service, the programme builds on everything proven successful within the Foundation and Practitioner programmes, such as providing opportunities for practising new skills in a safe environment.**

Two recurring themes of inclusion and hybrid ways of working in government are woven into the programme's design – which also prioritises action learning over management theory. All of the activities within the Senior Practitioner programme are grounded in relatable, real-life Civil Service challenges, ensuring that everything is relevant to learners' day-to-day work.

# How it works

The programme is delivered over the course of five months and features four training modules, each of which contains an all-day facilitated workshop. With a total expected time commitment of 62.5 hours, it also contains a launch workshop, one-to-one coaching, action learning sets, a digital management simulation and a final reflection event. A host of online learning assets, such as videos, podcasts and other supplementary resources, are also made available to support learners throughout the programme.

Underpinning all of this is a focus on self-awareness and emotional intelligence. These are vital considerations for any manager; encouraging them to think about how their words and actions are perceived and how their thoughts, feelings and emotions affect their interactions with the people around them.

At the outset, learners are placed into cohorts of 12 that remain together throughout the programme, supported by a single facilitator. This helps create strong peer networks that can support learners through their learning journey as they share insights, ideas and experiences with the rest of their group.

Each of the programme's four modules is accompanied by a workbook that contains all the necessary preparatory training activities. The subsequent workshop is an opportunity to put into practice all the knowledge and skills outlined in the workbook - so it's essential this is completed in a timely fashion ahead of each workshop.

# Learner outcomes

## The Senior Practitioner programme is designed to:



Increase your levels of self-awareness and emotional intelligence.



Show you how to take a coaching style approach to developing your team members and how to create an environment of psychological safety.



Demonstrate how to effectively receive and deliver challenging feedback, both with your colleagues and your stakeholders.



Equip you with an understanding of systems thinking. You'll be confident in balancing business-as-usual operations with calculated risk-taking, designed to improve the service your team delivers.



Allow you to use your networks to seek out further perspectives and expertise that can improve your decision-making and lead to increased innovation.





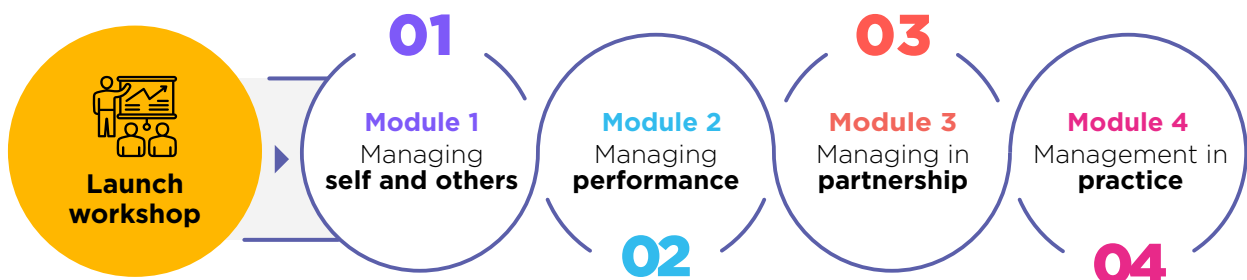
# What can I expect?

The programme begins with a three-hour launch workshop to explain the programme's purpose and objectives; how it's structured; and the commitment it requires from you.

After this, you're expected to complete a psychometric assessment. This will help populate your Growth Profile; an in-depth account of your growth and survival habits that helps lay the foundations for the rest of the programme. As well as providing a starting point for self-reflection and the growth areas to focus on, this also helps to inform the one-to-one coaching that follows.

This takes the shape of a one-hour session with a coach from leadership and management specialists, Roffey Park, after which you'll create your own personal development plan. This will be captured in your PULSE journal, which you'll continue to update as the programme progresses, using it to reflect on what you've learned and how you'll embed this back in the workplace.

**With all these activities completed, it will be time to launch yourself into the programme's four modules. These explore managing yourself and others; managing performance; managing in partnership; and managing in practice.**





## What happens in each module?

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The first three modules are approached in broadly the same way, with the preparatory workbook laying the groundwork for the subsequent practical workshop. Your first opportunity for reflection then comes in a one-hour, post-workshop impact review. After **Module 1**, this will be with one of your peers. After **Modules 2 and 3**, it will be with your line manager.

In each instance, the idea is to reflect on your training and to monitor progress against your personal development plan, revising certain aspects of this, if required.

After each of the first three modules, you'll also take part in a half-day action learning set (ALS). Alongside the other members of your ALS group, you'll apply what you've learned to a real-life problem. The first of these sessions will be facilitated and the next two are self-directed, meaning it's your responsibility to set these sessions up and make them happen (you will receive guidance on how to do this).

A valuable benefit of being part of an ALS is that it provides time away from your daily routine to reflect and think

differently. It's a chance to develop new ideas and solutions, to learn from other people's thought processes and problem-solving approaches and to further develop your own listening, questioning and feedback skills. All this happens in a safe environment where you're encouraged to challenge one another, form new relationships and broaden your perspectives.

**Module 4** is slightly different in that it features a management simulation in which you'll apply everything you've learned from the three previous modules. The scenario you'll explore will be aligned to the government's Net Zero Strategy, helping expand your understanding of the current ESG (environmental, social and governance) agenda.

Having also retaken your psychometric assessment at this point, and reflected on the results with your line manager, you'll then take part in one final reflective session with the rest of your group before the programme closes.



# The modules

## Module 1:

### Managing self and others

The opening module of the programme focuses on managing yourself and others. The module's all-day workshop looks at who you are as a manager before encouraging you to consider the type of manager you would like to be and how you can achieve this. This involves thinking about the extent to which you control or support your team members. It also involves an assessment of your balance of leadership and management and how that might need to change to meet the needs of your role, team or organisation. Your working environment, different leadership styles and how best to engage with your team members are just some of the other topics that are also explored during the day.

By the end of the workshop, you'll be able to identify and adapt the level of control or support that you provide as a manager. Able to assess the balance between your leadership and management behaviours, you'll know how to make adjustments when necessary. Having identified your natural leadership styles, you'll be able to flex these according to any given situation and context. You'll also know what's required to be an engaging manager and how to create a psychologically safe environment for your team.

## Module 2:

### Managing performance

Developing team members is the responsibility of every manager. The better you are at developing and empowering the people around you, the more likely you are to retain them in the long term. This requires you to support their development and to challenge them to grow – but striking the right balance of challenge and support (questioning vs telling) can be tricky.

The second module explores this challenge in more detail and helps you to develop the sort of coaching mindset that can prove invaluable in such situations. It considers what we mean by coaching, what it means to have a coaching mindset and the qualities and skills that a good coach needs.

Having completed this module, you'll be able to deploy a range of coaching techniques to support individual team members' specific developmental needs. You'll also be able to create a safe space where coaching activities and feedback can be delivered and received effectively.



# The modules

## Module 3:

### Managing in partnership

To manage effectively is to help bring out the energy that naturally exists within people. The best, most engaging, managers understand that this requires them to manage in partnership – i.e. working as part of a network and engaging the people within that network to help solve challenges and deliver better outcomes. What this requires is a systems thinking mindset; an ability to see the bigger picture, understand the wider context and be appreciative of any relationships and interdependencies that exist within it.

The third module of this programme explores managing in partnership and how to apply systems thinking approaches. It also looks at the principles of adaptive leadership; a practical approach to solving business issues, helping leaders to identify and focus on the most important aspects of a business operation and discarding what it can do without. As well as helping confront fast-paced, complex challenges, this can improve the service a team delivers by experimenting with new ideas and taking calculated risks.

By the time you've finished this module, you'll be able to use a systems thinking mindset to improve your team's efficiency and processes. You'll be able to apply the principles of adaptive leadership to particularly complex challenges and to create an environment where teams can innovate while still maintaining their business-as-usual operations.

## Module 4:

### Management in practice

The programme's final module is all about applying the knowledge and skills gained from the first three modules to a game-based simulation. Within this, you'll be assigned roles within a fictitious business that's looking to reduce its carbon emissions by 45% while continuing to grow and remain profitable.

Each of the three phases of the simulation – where every minute represents a week's trading – will focus your thinking on themes that are vital to your role in the Civil Service, such as efficiency, team working and delivering value-for-money outcomes. After each phase, there will be time to reflect on both your own performance and that of the team.

As well as applying the skills and behaviours developed earlier in the programme, the simulation is also a test of your collective decision-making ability and how well you can interpret ambiguous and competing data from multiple sources.



## How to book?

Visit **[Prospectus Online](#)** for more information about the programme, upcoming dates on the open schedule and how to make a booking for a full cohort.

If you have any questions or need any help, please contact the Helpdesk on **0203 640 7985** or at **[support@governmentcampus.co.uk](mailto:support@governmentcampus.co.uk)** from 8:30am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday.





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