



Water & Wastewater Leadership Center 2027

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

About the Program

Exceptional leadership is essential as water and wastewater utilities strive to thrive as utilities of the future. The Water & Wastewater Leadership Center arms utility executives with the management and leadership skills they need to excel as they meet the challenges of today – and seize the opportunities of tomorrow.

Target Audience:

Current and up-and-coming public and private water and wastewater utility leaders including CEOs, General Managers, Senior Managers, and upper-level management.

Learning Objectives:

- Increase self-awareness of personal leadership styles and how to adapt in order to build, lead, and motivate high performing teams
- Apply communication and collaboration best practices for engaging authentically with a range of stakeholders
- Recognize the value and organizational impact of diversity, equity & inclusion efforts and demonstrate inclusive leadership behaviors
- Increase ability to manage effectively amidst continuous change and to initiate change in organizations
- Utilize practical tools and frameworks to enhance individual leadership skills, implement organizational vision strategies, and drive strategic initiatives



2027 PROGRAM SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Monday, March 1	Tuesday, March 2	Wednesday, March 3	Thursday, March 4	Friday, March 5	Saturday, March 6
Participant Arrivals - Hotel check-in available at 3pm	Introduction	Utility Executive Mindset Mary Tiger Catherine Carter	Storytelling Heidi Shultz	Strategic Change in an Uncertain Environment Atul Nerkar	Motivation & Performance Management Mabel Miguel
	Leading Self & Teams Mabel Miguel				
	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
	Leadership Styles & Introduction to Benchmark 360 Mabel Miguel	Executive Coaching Sessions UNC Coaches	Storytelling Heidi Shultz	Innovation in the Sector Atul Nerkar Ken Waldroup	FREE TIME
Welcome Reception and Dinner	Dinner Available	Dinner on your own	Reception & Dinner	Dinner on your own	Dinner on your own

Sunday, March 7	Monday, March 8	Tuesday, March 9	Wednesday, March 10	Thursday, March 11
FREE DAY Breakfast Available, Lunch and Dinner on your own	Executive Decision-Making Sreedhari Desai	Leading Change in Organizations Mabel Miguel	Inclusive Leadership Angel Nix	Power & Influence Action Planning Sreedhari Desai
	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Graduation Celebration Lunch
	Executive Decision-Making Sreedhari Desai	Experience Change Simulation Mabel Miguel	Collaboration through Critical Conversations Angel Nix	Participant Departures after 2pm, Flights after 4pm
	Dinner Available	Dinner on your own	Reception & Dinner	



SESSION DETAILS

Topic: Leading Self & Teams

Instructor: Mabel Miguel

Objectives:

- (1) Build self-confidence through greater awareness of personal leadership style and values
- (2) Understand the difference between Leadership and Management
- (3) Embark on introspection, self-disclosure, and feedback
- (4) Explore how leadership expectations changes as leaders shift to new roles and audiences

Topic: Leadership Styles & Introduction to Benchmark 360

Instructor: Mabel Miguel

Objective:

- (1) Reflect on the effects of emotionally intelligent and authentic leadership
- (2) Consider strategies for managing self development
- (3) Begin processing 360 Benchmarks feedback to increase self-awareness and gain perspective on strengths and areas of vulnerability to increase leadership agility

Topic: Utility Executive Mindset

Instructors: Mary Tiger and Catherine Carter

Objectives:

- (1) Explore effective utility management through a 360-degree lens and how to balance priorities of all stakeholders
- (2) Apply and experience others' perspectives in decision-making scenarios using a simulated activity
- (3) Discuss best practices for boards and utility management and budgeting that balances the short and long-term consequences of investment decisions



Topic: Executive Coaching Session

UNC Executive Coaches facilitate one-on-one executive coaching sessions with each participant to support their professional development. Coaches will ask questions, guide reflection, and provide suggestions, but don't provide answers or judgement.

Objectives:

- (1) Debrief 360 report together to understand how others see your behaviors and discuss strengths and strengths overused
- (2) Encourage self-reflection on leadership development goals and opportunities
- (3) Build a plan to address leadership development goals and next steps to advance

Topic: Storytelling to Engage and Inspire

Instructor: Heidi Schultz

Objectives:

- (1) Examine and apply effective storytelling framework
- (2) Understand storytelling best practices for maximum effectiveness
- (3) Practice how to shape a story, and share stories to inspire and authentically engage with audiences in your community in various forums

Topic: Strategic Change in an Uncertain Environment

Instructor: Atul Nerkar

Objectives:

- (1) What is strategy? Why is it important to water and wastewater utilities?
- (2) How does one formulate and implement strategy?
- (3) Differences between strategy formulation and implementation
- (4) Organizational levers that influence strategy implementation



Topic: Innovation in the Sector

Instructors: Atul Nerkar and Ken Waldroup

Objectives:

- (1) Discuss the water industry and how strategic foresight and help prepare utilities for risks that can derail strategic plans
- (2) Practice how to plan for unexpected risks
- (3) Reflect on best practices and sector-wide risks, priorities and trends

Topic: Motivation & Performance Management

Instructor: Mabel Miguel

Objectives:

- (1) Develop an understanding of how personal tendencies when collecting and processing information affect team dynamics
- (2) Reflect on how leaders can ensure that teams they lead have the right information-processing composition to fit the challenges they face
- (3) Understand the role of values and incentives in performance and discuss best practices in motivating high performance
- (4) Identify tools to align goals, rewards, and incentives to achieve performance

Topic: Executive Decision Making

Instructor: Sreedhari Desai

Objectives:

- (1) Analyze problem solving and decision making at both the individual and team level
- (2) Understand the differences between inquiry and advocacy modes of group decision-making as well as how and when to use which approach
- (3) Gain insight into our own decision-making processes and identify clear action steps to improve both individual and team decision



Topic: Leading Change

Instructor: Mabel Miguel

Objectives:

- (1) Stimulate a discussion of current and future changes in your organization and the extent to which these changes are likely to produce desired outcomes
- (2) Consider alternative frameworks that can be used to plan, implement, and evaluate change in organizations
- (3) Apply frameworks and tools for leading change in a simulated organization in order to translate general principles into specific tactics and decisions

Topic: Inclusive Leadership

Instructor: Angel Nix

Objectives:

- (1) Build awareness of how mental models and past experiences influence actions and assumptions
- (2) Discuss how to effectively use the ladder of influence to build awareness of assumptions
- (3) Learn how to bring different views and perspectives to create a healthy culture and facilitate open communication
- (4) Explore how to build trust and openness in teams to enable collaboration and innovation

Topic: Collaboration through Critical Conversations

Instructor: Angel Nix

Objectives:

1. Understand level I and level II (advanced) active listening skills and practice level II active listening
2. Use Emotional Intelligence to identify barriers to effective communication
3. Give and receive feedback effectively
4. Learn communication strategies to help you build more effective relationships



Topic: Power & Influence

Instructor: Sreedhari Desai

Objectives:

- (1) Understand the role of power and influence in leadership
- (2) Assess power attitudes, sources, and influence styles and how to influence others
- (3) Learn strategies for balancing helpful and healthy relationship to power to enable success

Topic: Personal Reflections

Instructor: Sreedhari Desai

Objectives:

- (1) Reflect and articulate major learnings from this program
- (2) Understand the typical barriers to change and to the transfer of learning
- (3) Develop an implementable plan to apply key learnings