Leadership Skills for Operations Management Professionals

Syllabus / Course Outline

1. Course Description

This course equips operations management professionals with the essential leadership skills required to manage people, optimize processes, solve problems, and drive organizational performance. Participants will learn how to lead teams effectively, make confident decisions, communicate clearly, manage conflicts, motivate staff, and create a culture of continuous improvement within operations-focused environments.
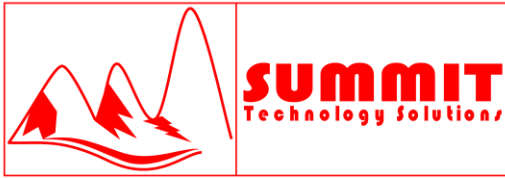
2. Learning Objectives

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

- Demonstrate practical leadership behaviors suitable for operations environments.
- Communicate clearly and confidently across different levels of the organization.
- Apply decision-making and problem-solving techniques to operational challenges.
- Motivate and coach team members for improved performance.
- Lead change initiatives and continuous improvement activities.
- Handle conflicts and difficult situations with professionalism.
- Build resilient, high-performing operational teams.

3. Target Audience

- Operations Executives, Supervisors, Engineers
- Assistant Managers, Managers
- Production, Manufacturing, Maintenance, Supply Chain, and Facilities personnel
- Anyone transitioning into a leadership role within operations

4. Course Outline

Module 1: Introduction to Leadership in Operations

- Leadership vs. management: What operations leaders must do differently
- Key leadership competencies for operations professionals
- The role of emotional intelligence (EQ) in high-pressure environments
- Identifying your leadership style

Module 2: Effective Communication for Operations Leaders
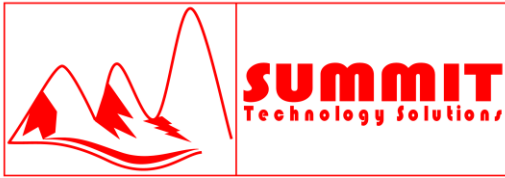
- Clear, concise communication in fast-paced environments
- Upward, downward, and cross-functional communication
- Giving instructions and feedback effectively
- Active listening and empathy
- Communicating during crises or operational disruptions

Module 3: Problem-Solving & Decision-Making

- Structured problem-solving tools (5 Whys, Fishbone, PDCA)
- Prioritizing issues under time pressure
- Operational decision-making using data and logic
- Risk assessment and contingency planning
- Leading root-cause analysis sessions

Module 4: Building and Leading High-Performance Teams

- Characteristics of effective operational teams
- Delegation strategies for shift-based and production environments
- Motivating diverse workforce groups

- Coaching for performance improvement

- Managing generational differences in the workforce

Module 5: Conflict Management & Handling Difficult Situations

- Types of conflict in operations: process, interpersonal, resource-based

- Tools and frameworks for resolving conflicts fairly

- Handling underperformance

- Managing difficult conversations professionally

- De-escalation techniques for high-stress scenarios

Module 6: Change Leadership & Continuous Improvement

- Leading change in operations (Lean mindset)

- Encouraging a culture of continuous improvement

- Kaizen and small-step improvements

- Overcoming resistance to change

- Managing transitions, updates, and new SOP implementations

Module 7: Operational Leadership Execution

- Time and priority management for operational leaders

- Managing multiple shifts and cross-functional tasks

- Influencing without authority

- Building trust and credibility with stakeholders

- Leadership ethics and accountability