Institute for Professional Excellence

First Responder Leadership Program

From the Front Line to Strategic Command

Managing a scene is one thing; managing a department is another. Transitioning from the front line to management requires a specialized set of tools designed for the unique pressures of public safety. The First Responder Leadership Program is a comprehensive 6-week development course built specifically for mid-level managers in police, fire, and public works/emergency agencies.

This isn't just theory; it's a blend of academic rigor and street-level reality. You will be guided by veteran first responders, industry experts, and guest panels who understand the stakes of your profession.

- Complete a DISC Assessment and a DNA 25 leadership assessment to identify your personal strengths and growth areas.
- Complete a Capstone Project, where you will present an actionable improvement plan for your agency.

Registered with MCOLES and CPE eligible.

After completing this program, participants will be able to:

- Define a personal leadership philosophy based on values, ethics, and self-awareness
- Distinguish between transactional and transformational styles to build and restore trust
- Apply emotional intelligence to manage conflict and difficult conversations
- Understand the budgeting cycle, resource allocation, and fiscal responsibility
- Execute effective decision-making and prioritization under extreme pressure
- Implement wellness strategies to mitigate trauma impact

Learn more: ipex@davenport.edu | 616.742.2075

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Topics

1: Personal & Authentic Leadership

Before you can lead others, you must lead yourself. This session explores your personal values and ethics to help you define your authentic leadership style. True leadership is about influence, not just rank. You'll learn to move beyond basic transactional management and master transformational leadership that inspires real impact.

2: Emotional Intelligence & High-Performing Teams

Great teams don't happen by accident—they are intentionally built through strong interpersonal dynamics. Harness emotional intelligence to navigate difficult conversations, de-escalate internal conflict, and break down silos. Then you'll focus on the art of cross-functional collaboration to transform individual effort into high-performing teamwork.

3: Budget Fundamentals & Grant Writing

This session demystifies the public sector budget cycle. You'll gain the skills to justify resource needs, write winning grant proposals, and practice the kind of fiscal stewardship that powers your department's core mission.

4: Organizational Culture & Decision Making Under Pressure

A resilient culture is the ultimate anchor when crisis hits. Learn to audit your agency's environment, navigate change fatigue, and foster an inclusive workplace that thrives under stress. Through realistic emergency simulations, you'll hone your ability to make sharp, critical decisions in fast-moving, high-ambiguity situations where the margin for error is thin.

5: Resilience & Mental Wellness

You'll explore different types of trauma and learn actionable wellness strategies. By the end of the session, you'll have a wellness toolkit to promote long-term health.

6: Strategic Thinking & Capstone Presentation

You'll utilize strategic foresight for long-term planning, shifting from a reactive mindset to a proactive one. The course wraps up with a Capstone Presentation, an actionable agency improvement plan you can take back to your chief or director immediately.

Who Should Attend

Mid-level supervisors and managers who are ready to elevate their leadership presence, enhance team performance, and gain the fiscal and strategic skills necessary for advancement.

IPEx is an IACET Accredited Provider. IPEx offers IACET CEUs for its learning events that comply with the ANSI/IACET Continuing Education and Training Standard.

AUTHORIZED IACET PROVIDER

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