



Team Leadership in Research

Coaching Edition

RESEARCH MANAGEMENT MASTERY

RESEARCH TEAM LEADER/ LAB MANAGER,

Institution | Institution

Department

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City, State Zip code



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Dear Research Team Leader/ Lab Manager,

The top concern of research team leaders contributing to stress, strain, and a lack of career fulfillment is the time and energy required **to maintain** their research programs. Here, we do not even speak about growing, building, and stretching to do top-notch, creative research with a diverse, highly skilled, collaborative team. Maintenance includes simply keeping the doors open, and research operations running, providing regular feedback to team members, managing team productivity, and keeping people motivated.

Many research team leaders want to **encourage high levels of performance without running a sweat shop**. They struggle to find the right balance that does not hamper intrinsic motivation. Some wonder if they or their team members are in the wrong job. The amount of energy and time needed to make this operation work and keep the team engaged seems unsustainable.



ABOUT STEFANIE



Stefanie grew up in Berlin, Germany and completed a Ph.D. in Neuroscience in Munich before she permanently relocated to the US.

She became a personal development and leadership nerd during her postdoctoral training, initially to increase her competitiveness and later because she realized that she could use these strategies and tools to create a happier, balanced life AND increase her levels of success.

She started her independent research program in 2016, built a thriving research team, and brought in more than \$6M in funding during her first two years on the tenure track. She meanwhile earned tenure and moved institutions to take her research and institutional leadership to the next level.

Stefanie started Team Leadership In Research in 2019 leveraging her life coaching skills and the experience she

There are two reasons for this drain of energy:

1. Few research team leaders or lab managers have the ability to step out of potentially harmful behaviors, acquired passively from key figures in their lives and careers, without substantial effort.

Numerous studies have determined that mental health, well-being, intrinsic motivation, and engagement at work are linked to three needs: autonomy (the capacity to make uncoerced decisions about how to work), competence (a high degree of mastery of a skill or capability of executing a task), and relatedness (a feeling of belonging and community).

Recent studies demonstrated that support by leadership to fulfill these needs is the most relevant factor promoting intrinsic work motivation. Interfering with these needs through unskilled behaviors of the leader impacts satisfaction, mood, and motivation, and performance more than enhancing them.

Most academic leaders do not intentionally cultivate harmful leadership and management styles. Yet, when you feel pressed for time and results, out of control, and exhausted you are at risk of falling into “control and command”, micromanaging leadership styles along the lines of “I just have to do it myself.” or “Let me



had gained as head coach in another business. Team Leadership In Research systematizes leadership knowledge and management approaches specifically for research teams to help team leaders achieve success and fulfillment.*

Her big mission is to change the academic culture from negativity and chronic stress to one where people express their unique brilliance AND live a fun, joyful, happy life by bringing leadership training along with positivity to her community.

explain to you (again) how you do X." or "You should know better."

No judgement here, we've all done this at times.

But this behavior comes at a cost. Over time, team members may lose their excitement for work and do not develop the level of independence that is required and desired.

To implement leadership strategies that foster autonomy, relatedness, and a feeling of competence despite the huge learning curves in research takes guidance and a lot of practice.

2. Few research team leaders or lab managers have learned management approaches for creating systems and work processes supporting highly creative, independent yet collaborative work on complex problems.

If you are a systems person, you created standard operating procedures and rules for your team but may struggle with compliance having to constantly remind people. Or these systems may take a lot of time and energy to maintain, so people do not stick with them. Or they make people feel like they have little autonomy. Or they make it impossible to not make mistakes and your reminders may inadvertently create an environment that feels unsafe and discourages independence.





** I cannot guarantee that you will achieve comparable results by signing up for this program. My level of success is based on a strong dedication to my own personal and professional growth and rooted in a decade of studying resources about leadership. I read dozens of books on the topic, have dug into the underlying research and spent close to \$100k on trainings to deepen my leadership and coaching skills. Importantly, I regularly spend time integrating what I learn and tuning how I show up as a leader and how I manage my team. I continue to experiment with my team and clients to adapt leadership and management principles.*

Robert, Alex, and I designed this program – the third Team Leadership In Research Program and first team-taught one – as a shortcut for you, so that you do not have read books about leadership, communication, and coaching for 10 years. However, we cannot put the skills into practice for you. The willingness to work on yourself first, then implement with your team holding all of you accountable for the results that you get is the crucial linchpin to becoming a successful and fulfilled leader.

If systems are not your thing and you prefer to run things organically, you may find yourself recreating the wheel and teaching the same stuff over and over. Or you may find that changes have been instituted without your knowledge even though “it was always done this way.”

It doesn't have to be this way. There are ways to set up your systems to be self-organizing and to encourage accountability and follow-through by the entire team without draining a lot of resources. If done using the appropriate management strategies, you will save time and resources.

For example, most research team leaders hold weekly lab meetings. If you were able to shorten this meeting by 30min while getting the same value out for your team, most of us would likely think something along the lines of: “It’s just half an hour.” But at a team size of 6 people, preserving 30 minutes per week, saves 150 hours throughout the year. That is almost one working month! What could you do with 3.75 more weeks this year?!

As a step in the right direction, most research and academic institutions now have instituted leadership or lab management training programs. We have taken a few of those ourselves. While a good starting point, this type of trainings often focuses on:



ABOUT ROBERT



Robert grew up in Berlin, Germany. He completed a master's degree in mathematics in Berlin and Barcelona before he became a Human Resources professional while at PWC, one of the "Big Four" accounting firms. During this career stage he got insights to the structure of multi-national blue-chip corporations, as well as small and medium sized companies. During this time, he gained understanding of why some companies are more successful than others. Spoiler alert: It has to do with leadership and management strategies

Based on this expertise, he became an executive at RWE, the biggest energy supply corporation in Germany. There he became a project lead of "New Way of working", a full company transformation program further diving into different organizational set-ups and learning how

- Leadership theory that gives you an overview of leadership styles out there.
- Descriptions of what you could or should do to be a good mentor.
- Your university structure (who is who in admin leadership, how money flows within the university, how personnel cost is structured, how to make a budget)

These trainings rarely provide long-term support and concrete advice for practical implementation while you are creating these systems, working with your team, and encountering challenges. They require that you set aside CEO time independently and follow through with implementation. But who does this without more detailed instruction?

Facilitating meaningful changes and engraining new behaviors of both the leader and the team takes months

if not years because they occur at several levels: 1. Learning new knowledge, 2. Understanding how you currently operate, what works and what doesn't, 3. Implementing new approaches, and 4. Engraining new patterns and approaches, so that they are your go-to strategies even during stressful situations.

A sounding board, feedback, and coaching during the transition from current ways of leading and managing the team to testing and



a holistic approach to leadership, operational excellence and End2End-process management drives performance, success, and satisfaction of employees.

To back his practical experiences up with theoretical insight, Robert has become a certified Six Sigma Master Black Belt, an Agile coach, a certified Professional Scrum master and Scrum Product owner as well as a PRINCE2- project manager.

Robert believes that excellence in leadership and self-organizing teams are two different words for the same thing. The concept of servant leadership in Scrum, i.e., a great leader's role is to support team members to perform at their best. Robert teaches leaders how to do exactly that.

rolling out new systems and approaches are key to success. There will inevitably be challenges during this time of growth because growth can be uncomfortable and requires a certain amount of initial energy and time investment.

Without a structure in place to implement changes step-by-step and support to adjust the approaches to your specific needs, it is likely that you and your team fall back into old patterns.

THE 7-STEP RESEARCH MANAGEMENT MASTERY PROGRAM CONTENT

Team Leadership in Research, Research Management Mastery addresses these challenges by training you in leadership and management skills geared toward increasing autonomy, competence, and a sense of community of team members. Our focus is on providing you with long-term multifaceted support while you learn about and implement leadership and management approaches tailored to research teams.

Specifically, we will lead you through 7 distinct steps creating a **visual research team manifesto**. This will be a play book for your **team**. This guide for new and current team members will ensure continuity and consistency over long periods of time even if key

ABOUT ALEX



Alexandra Schober (aka Alex) was born and raised in upstate New York where she completed her PhD in neuropharmacology. During her PhD, she became the lab manager and discovered a passion for management and workflow efficiencies. In 2018, she moved to Montreal, Canada to do her postdoctoral fellowship and shortly after became lab manager once again. As someone who is invested in personal growth and leadership, she spent her free time building these skills through seminars, trainings, and books. Through these trainings, her passion grew into a desire to bring about change to academia from within by training current and future researchers to become better managers and leaders. Her long-term goal is to help scientists everywhere to gain the skills necessary to foster supportive and positive work environments in their labs, thus allowing great science to happen...

members of the team leave. It will be flexible and adaptable enabling creativity, autonomy, accountability, and independence.

The systems created in this program will help you reduce the time & energy spent to maintain your research program, so that you free up these resources and create a foundation for building your program to the next level.

The program will guide you through the following 7 steps:

Step 1: Process management: Understand how your daily work flows and why processes brake down. Set standards for processes, e.g. lab documentation, and learn how to create accountability so that you don't have to constantly remind your team.

Step 2: Problem solving: Learn various methods for tackling problems of different magnitudes and train your team to distinguish clear, complicated, complex, and chaotic contexts, so that you are not spending your time solving problems that your team can handle or are out of the loop when you should be involved.

Step 3: Meeting management: Structure your team communication so that creativity is increased, the information flow is not disrupted, team members are in the know about



what matters, and you all achieve your outcomes without fruitless discussions that cost a lot of time and lead nowhere.

Step 4: Team management: Get a handle on skill development and take the awkwardness and pain out of providing feedback to your team. You will map out a skill matrix to get an unbiased and fair view of competencies and different level of skill of your team. You will learn how to encourage growth without discouraging your team.

Step 5: Project management: Learn about different ways to manage projects and how to teach your team, so that members can manage their own projects efficiently without your constant oversight.

Step 6: Team performance: Learn how to set engaging targets for your team and how to measure success even if progress is slow and part of it is learning. Get an introduction to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Objectives & Key Results (OKRs), a process that Stefanie has used quite effectively with her research team. Learn how to speak about good as well as improvable performance without ruffling feathers and encountering drama.

Step 7: Continuous improvement of research operations: Create an environment where your team members are keen to





improve daily research operations, so that you are not the only person who spends time & energy making things work.

RESEARCH MANAGEMENT MASTERY TRAINING STRUCTURE

The training program begins in April 2022 and runs for 6 months. It is structured as follows:

1. **Recorded video training sessions** to cover the core training and management principles (10 modules). Here, we pull on the most appropriate team management approaches & frameworks suited for small and medium-size research teams.
2. **Implementation with your team.** Rather than relying on case studies that may or may not apply to your individual situation, you will implement with your team as we go and get feedback from us. Leadership & management is best learned by doing it.
3. **TLIR Research Management Mastery group coaching sessions** to discuss the course content and develop strategies for implementation with your team. This is your safe forum to bounce around ideas and address any challenges that you may encounter. Group calls will take place mostly on Wednesdays at 10 AM Eastern Time and sometimes switch to Mondays or Fridays to accommodate Holidays or trainer schedules.



4. **Videos with examples for training implementation** that cover how we implemented the tools that you'll learn with our research and corporate teams. We will share what works or what doesn't and how you can create a great experience for yourself and your team.

5. **Templates** for work processes, skill development matrix, the living research team manifesto etc. that will make it easier and quicker for you to build smooth systems. We spent months creating these tools and adapting them to the work of research teams. We're excited to share this resource with you.

BONUS

1. 3 **One-on-one problem-solving sessions (30min)** to keep you on track or get you unstuck. **\$1500 value**

TUITION

The regular tuition for the Team Leadership in Research **Research Management Mastery** 6-months program is **\$5797**. You may qualify for an early-bird discount reducing the tuition to **\$4797** (until March 24, 2022). People usually use institutional funds (start-up funds,





departmental grants, training grants) to pay for the program.

Payment plans are an option. Occasionally clients decide to invest in themselves using their personal funds.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Participation in the course is **by application only**. If you are interested in joining, you will fill out an online application. If we believe that the program is a fit for your needs, we will invite you to schedule a 30-minute phone conversation with Stefanie during which we will talk about your needs, questions, concerns, and commitment. If we feel that you fit well into the small group that we are bringing together, we will invite you to join the program.

Currently, **four seats remain open** for the April cohort.

We encourage you to only apply if you are ready to commit ~2-3h/week in building your skills and systems. We understand that life happens and that your workload will be intense at times. Such is the life of any person in a role of responsibility and leadership. To accommodate this, we have built three catch-up periods into the program structure during which no new content is rolled out. During catch-up time you will be able to complete assignments, catch-up on digesting course content, or take a break.





While we plan to run the program again, perhaps in fall, we cannot guarantee that there is another round in 2022.

Sincerely,

Stefanie, Robert & Alex



