
Workforce Empowerment and Distributed Decision-Making Training Course

15 – 19 March 2027
Cape town





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Ref: 149_15556 **Date:** 15 – 19 March 2027 **Location:** Cape town **Fees:** 4800 GBP

Programme Summary

Workforce empowerment and distributed decision-making is a five-day training course for HR directors and senior line leaders at advanced level, culminating in an empowerment and growth plan for a business unit. Many organisations ask staff to take ownership while keeping every meaningful decision at the top and leaving development to annual training cycles. The approach redesigns decision rights first, then builds the conditions and routines that let people grow through their work. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme in workforce empowerment and distributed decision-making.

The Business Case

When decisions queue at senior level, response times lengthen, capable staff disengage and leaders spend their time approving rather than leading. Empowerment without clear limits creates the opposite risk: inconsistent decisions and unmanaged exposure. Organisations that distribute authority deliberately, and pair it with continuous on-the-job development, move faster while keeping control.

- Decision Cycle Time: Shortens as routine approvals move to the level closest to the work.
- Internal Capability Growth: Rises as stretch assignments and growth conversations replace ad hoc training.
- Leadership Capacity: Increases as senior time shifts from approvals to direction and coaching.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Structural Empowerment Kanter: Access to information, resources, support and opportunity frames the organisational diagnosis in Session 1.
- Psychological Empowerment Spreitzer: Its four dimensions of meaning, competence, self-determination and impact guide the design of roles and decision rights in Session 2.
- The 70-20-10 Model: Its balance of experience, social learning and formal learning shapes the development system built in Sessions 3 and 4.
- ISO 10015: Its guidelines for competence management and people development inform how capability growth is planned and measured in Session 4.

Intended Participants

- Leaders who decide which decisions are retained at the top and which are delegated.
- HR heads who design people development systems and manager expectations.
- Senior managers whose teams depend on staff acting without constant escalation.
- Development leaders who need on-the-job learning to show measurable capability gains.

The programme serves government agencies, banking, energy and healthcare organisations.



Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to diagnose the structural and psychological barriers to empowerment in their organisation.
2. Participants will be able to construct a decision rights matrix with clear limits, escalation points and accountability.
3. Participants will be able to design stretch assignments and self-directed development plans using the 70-20-10 model.
4. Participants will be able to equip managers with developer routines and continuous growth conversations.
5. Participants will be able to evaluate capability growth with leading and lagging indicators.
6. Participants will be able to justify an empowerment and growth plan to an executive team.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Workforce Empowerment Principles and Diagnosis

Where does the organisation hold back decisions and growth, and why?

- Structural and Psychological Empowerment Models Compared
- Empowerment Barriers: Control Culture, Information Gaps and Fear of Error
- Spreitzer Empowerment Dimensions as a Diagnostic Survey
- Decision Bottleneck Mapping Across Approval Chains
- Empowerment Readiness Assessment by Team and Role

Day 2: Distributed Decision-Making and Delegation Design

Which decisions should move closer to the work, and within what limits?

- Decision Rights Matrix and Delegation Levels
- Guardrails, Risk Thresholds and Escalation Rules
- Accountability Without Micromanagement
- Role Redesign for Autonomy and Impact
- Information Access and Transparency for Front-Line Decisions

Day 3: Continuous Development on the Job

How do people keep growing through the work itself?

- 70-20-10 Model Applied to Senior and Specialist Roles
- Stretch Assignments, Rotations and Project-Based Growth
- Self-Directed Individual Development Plans
- Peer Learning, Mentoring and Communities of Practice
- Learning From Mistakes and After-Action Reviews



Day 4: Managers as Developers and Measuring Growth

What must managers do routinely, and how is capability growth shown?

- Manager-as-Developer Routines and Expectations
- Continuous Growth Conversations and Check-Ins
- ISO 10015 Competence Management and Development Cycle
- Capability Growth Indicators: Leading and Lagging Measures
- Recognising Ownership and Initiative

Day 5: Applying Workforce Empowerment to a Business Unit

Is the plan ready for executive approval and phased rollout?

- Day 1 Diagnosis Converted Into Priority Actions
- Day 2 Decision Rights Matrix Tested Against Live Scenarios
- Day 3 Development Pathways Linked to Delegated Responsibilities
- Pilot Design, Sponsorship and Review Points
- Empowerment and Growth Plan Completion

Methodology

The programme relies on case analysis and structured exercises. Participants map real approval chains from their organisations, redesign decision rights in small groups and test them against scenarios from public service and commercial settings. Each session closes with a peer review of the artefact produced, so the capstone is built step by step.

- Suggested activity: Mapping the approval chain for a customer refund decision in a bank.
- Suggested activity: Redesigning delegation limits for ward managers in a hospital.
- Suggested activity: Building a 70-20-10 development plan for an emerging project leader.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes an empowerment and growth plan for a business unit. It contains the empowerment diagnosis, a decision rights matrix with guardrails, development pathways for key roles, manager routines, capability indicators and a pilot timetable.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is workforce empowerment training suitable for leaders of highly regulated teams?

Yes. It is set at advanced level for senior leaders and HR heads, and assumes experience of managing managers; guardrails and escalation rules are designed so that empowerment works within regulatory and risk limits.



Which models does workforce empowerment and distributed decision-making rest on?

It rests on Kanter's structural empowerment, Spreitzer's psychological empowerment, the 70-20-10 model and the people development guidelines of ISO 10015.

How is the workforce empowerment and growth plan used at work?

You can use it to secure executive approval for a pilot, brief managers on new decision rights and track capability growth over the following review cycles.

How does workforce empowerment differ from employee engagement courses?

It changes who decides what and how people grow through their work, rather than measuring and improving engagement scores or retention.