
Technical Manager Development Training

Course: Leading Specialists, Budgets, Delivery

4 – 8 January 2027
Amsterdam





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Programme Summary

Technical manager development is the subject of this one-week training course for engineers, scientists and technical specialists moving into team lead, section head and department management roles, ending in a management action plan for the participant's own role. Strong technical record does not prepare anyone to direct people, hold budgets or answer for delivery. The programme builds the habits of delegation, coaching, prioritisation and influence, applied to a real team and workload. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this technical manager development programme to mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

Organisations promote their best technical people into management and often lose output twice: the specialist stops specialising, and the new manager has not yet learned to lead. Delivery slips, good staff leave and conflicts reach senior levels late. A structured transition gives these managers working methods in place of trial and error.

- Team Retention: Improves as coaching and feedback become regular management routines.
- Delivery Reliability: Strengthens as priorities, resources and risks are planned and reviewed.
- Escalation Volume: Falls as disputes are handled early and at the right level.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Situational leadership: It matches the style of direction to the readiness of each person, and it frames Sessions 1 and 2.
- Tuckman's stages of team development: It explains how teams move from formation to performance, and it shapes Session 2.
- SMART objectives: They turn expectations into specific, measurable and time-bound commitments, and they support Sessions 2 and 3.
- The Eisenhower urgent-important matrix: It separates urgent demands from important work, and it guides Session 3.

Intended Participants

- Engineers and scientists newly responsible for the work of others.
- Team leaders who must delegate technical tasks they once performed themselves.
- Section heads who own a budget and a delivery commitment.
- Department managers who answer to non-technical executives.
- Specialists preparing for a first management appointment.



Typical functions include engineering design, laboratory services, manufacturing and infrastructure operations.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to diagnose the shift in role, measures and relationships that a management appointment brings.
2. Participants will be able to construct delegation plans that match tasks to the readiness of each team member.
3. Participants will be able to evaluate team development and adjust their leadership style accordingly.
4. Participants will be able to prioritise competing demands on time, budget and people using a structured matrix.
5. Participants will be able to justify technical decisions to non-technical stakeholders in plain terms.
6. Participants will be able to design a conversation plan for feedback, conflict or escalation.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Moving from Technical Specialist to Manager

What changes in the work, the measures of success and the relationships when a specialist becomes a manager?

- Role Transition Self-Assessment
- Manager Time Allocation Audit
- Situational Leadership Model
- Expectation Setting Sheet
- First Ninety Days Plan Outline

Day 2: Leading Specialists and Building Teams

How are technical people directed, motivated and developed without losing their expertise?

- Tuckman Team Stage Diagnostic
- Delegation Ladder
- Coaching Conversation Guide
- SMART Objective Writing Frame
- Feedback Delivery Script

Day 3: Priorities, Budgets and Delivery

How are scarce time, money and people allocated across competing technical demands?



- Eisenhower Priority Matrix
- Resource Loading Chart
- Budget Line Review Sheet
- Delivery Risk Register
- Stakeholder Commitment Log

Day 4: Influence, Conflict and Communication

How does a technical manager win agreement from non-technical colleagues and resolve disputes within the team?

- Stakeholder Influence Map
- Technical Briefing for Non-Specialists
- Conflict Style Profile
- Difficult Conversation Planner
- Escalation Decision Tree

Day 5: Applying the Methods to One Management Role

Do the transition, leadership, resource and influence methods hold together in one role?

- Applying the Session 1 Plan to the Participant's Role
- Setting Session 2 Objectives for a Real Team
- Testing the Plan Against the Session 3 Priority Matrix
- Rehearsing the Session 4 Difficult Conversation
- Completing the Management Action Plan

Methodology

The programme uses a case analysis method built on anonymised management situations from engineering, laboratory and operations settings. Participants work in small peer groups on their own role, rehearse conversations with observers and receive facilitator feedback on every plan, objective and briefing they prepare.

- Suggested activity: Auditing a typical week and moving tasks the manager should delegate onto a delegation ladder.
- Suggested activity: Rehearsing a feedback conversation with a peer playing a defensive specialist.
- Suggested activity: Rewriting a technical status report for a non-technical executive.



Capstone Output

Each participant completes a management action plan for their own role. It holds a role transition assessment, a delegation plan, team objectives, a priority and resource chart, a stakeholder influence map and a difficult conversation plan. The plan is used at work to agree expectations with a line manager, brief the team and guide the first quarter in post.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is technical manager development suitable for specialists who have never managed people?

Yes. The programme assumes strong technical experience and no prior management responsibility, and builds technical manager development from the first change of role upward.

Which models does technical manager development rest on in this programme?

It rests on situational leadership, Tuckman's stages of team development, SMART objectives and the Eisenhower urgent-important matrix.

How is the action plan from technical manager development used at work?

You use it to agree expectations with your line manager, brief your team and guide your first quarter in the new role.

How does technical manager development differ from a programme on project management?

It centres on leading specialists, holding budgets and influencing stakeholders in a standing role, while project management centres on planning and controlling a single time-bound piece of work.