



# Greater Nashville Technology Council Emerging Leaders In Technology (ELITE) 2021 SYLLABUS

## VISION AND PURPOSE

The Greater Nashville area continues to attract globally recognized employers while cultivating a vibrant entrepreneurial community. Although known primarily as “Music City”, this town has rich history, multiple universities, and many unique neighborhoods that provide a diverse group of employees a city that they are proud to call home. Middle TN experienced a 34% growth rate in Tech jobs from 2013 – 2018. It is expected that this region will continue to add tech roles at a higher pace than the national average with a projected growth rate of 15% from 2018 – 2023 compared to the national growth rate at 9%. (Source: State of Middle Tennessee Tech 2019, Author: Dr. Amy Harris, PhD).

In this highly competitive market, good leadership is critical to attract, retain, and strengthen the creative talent in the Nashville technology community. This program focuses on an area which has been traditionally underserved: developing the technology talent already in Nashville to become the leaders needed to support this thriving technology community. This program provides an opportunity for aspiring leaders and those new to a leadership role to come together to collectively gain new skills, share knowledge, network, and build Nashville’s leadership pool in the tech industry.

This is the 6<sup>th</sup> year for the Greater Nashville Technology Council Emerging Leaders In Technology (ELITE) program. Graduates of this program leave equipped with the knowledge and connections to be successful in a technology leadership role. Prior graduates have been recognized after program completion by their employees, peers, companies, and the Tech Council for their contributions. Through formal instruction, community program activities, dialogue, and mentoring, the ELITE program provides an education on the core skills required for people leadership and opportunities to refine and use those skills in the workplace and the community.

## PROGRAM GOALS

- Provide coaching and mentorship to high potential leaders
- Increase local tech talent retention by improving the leadership skills of front-line managers
- Create a sustainable support network for emerging IT leaders

## PROGRAM BENEFITS

- Self-awareness of your current leadership style and tools to make it what you wish it to become
- Networking and lasting connections with other leaders
- Knowledge and insight from local technology executives about the art of working with people and the lessons learned from their choices
- Lasting influence on the Nashville technology community through giving back via volunteer work

## PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

The program content is specifically tailored for individuals in technology who are either currently in an individual contributor position and desire a career path into a leadership role or who are new to a people leadership role, preferably less than 3 years in role.

- Must be located in the Greater Nashville area
- Must be a technology professional
- Must be a NTC member
- Must be in one of the following categories:
  - A manager of individual contributors (i.e. not a manager of managers)
  - A project manager/team lead or individual contributor with no direct authority over team members
- Must be interested in developing into a leadership role or more advanced leadership role
- Must have a burning desire to focus on personal development
- Must have the necessary personal and professional support to commit to actively participating in the sessions and activities throughout the full duration of the program, scheduled from August through November 2021. The celebration ceremony will be in November.

## PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES / EXPECTATIONS

- To commit to learning and set clear outcomes for your participation in the program
- To attend **all** training classes and associated practicums held on Thursdays from August through November. **Please carefully review the schedule before applying to the program.** Attendance will be taken. More than three absences will result in not meeting the eligibility requirements for successful graduation from the program
- To set aside time outside of the sessions to thoroughly review any pre-reading materials including completing an assessment prior to attending the first Training session
- To implement learnings in the workplace and bring back experiences, questions, and success stories
- To communicate with candor, respect, objectivity, and intellectual honesty
- To commit to action by working with a mentor through the program to report on your performance against those goals
- To encourage dialogue and discussions through classroom and Slack forum
- To complete a survey at the completion of the ELITE Program to provide input on its successes, opportunities, and impact

## MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES / EXPECTATIONS

- To attend the Program Kick-off Mixer and at least two practicums
- To lead relevant discussions in areas of interest and/or expertise
- To share insights and challenging circumstances, providing real-world perspective
- To meet outside of the formal program interactions with at least one program participant
- To encourage dialogue and discussions in meetings and through participation in the Slack forum
- To recommend resources for extended learning

## TOPICS

The topics and materials presented in ELITE provide technology professionals an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of leadership and people management. This material is directly applicable to the work environment. An opportunity to practice these skills will be provided in work and community settings. Following each training session, a practicum will be held. Mentors join these sessions to advance dialogue and create a deeper understanding of how these topics materialize in the role of a technology leader. The order of the topics is intentional, with the belief that the skills and material discussed will build upon the prior content, culminating in how they are used to lead for results.

The initially scoped 2021 topics include:

- How to communicate with absolutely anyone & increase your influence in the process
- How to build high performing teams
- How to get out of the weeds so you can lead
- How to lead change that doesn't fail
- How to do it all and not lose your mind

Topics may evolve based upon goals set by the 2021 Cohort participants, feedback from prior Cohort participants and mentors, and the changing expectations of technology leaders in the market.

## FORMAT AND SCHEDULE

The ELITE program is structured to provide a 6-part series of core materials through training sessions. The first session will be a full day (combining two parts into one day). At the conclusion of the first full day, the participants will be expected to build a set of goals of which will be their focus for the duration of the time in the program. **Given the core foundational element of this session, all participants are required to attend the full day in order to continue with the program.** Mentors, technology executives based in Greater Nashville, will join the ELITE participants in practicums to engage in discussions and activities to help participants apply, practice, and expand their thinking on these materials.

### Training Sessions

There will be five training sessions to cover the 6 topics as described in the Topics Section, designed with the primary intent to provide participants materials on core skills required of someone in a technology leadership role. Training will be delivered by Agility Leadership Group, a Nashville based boutique consulting firm that specializes in leadership development training, consulting and coaching for organizations around the world. Assessment tools will be included in the training to provide insights and self-understanding.

- The first training session will be a full day in length, scheduled for August 26<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 – 4:00 pm.
- The remaining four training sessions will last 2.5 hours, scheduled on Thursday mornings.

- Class will begin promptly at 7:30 am
- Some classes will have pre-work, short videos, or articles to read to prepare for the class. This pre-work will be no more than 30 minutes in length and is to be completed before class begins.
- Attendance in the training sessions is mandatory for successful completion of the program

### **Practicums & Topic Analysis**

In most cases, the week after each training session, there will be a working session with participants and mentors to expand upon the information gathered in the training sessions, discuss real-world application, and work through activities to translate theory to practical use.

- Participants are expected to implement what they have learned in the training sessions and bring back questions and lessons learned to the practicum to share with peers and mentors
- These sessions will include time for networking
- Each Practicum will last 2.5 hours, scheduled on Thursday mornings.
- Sessions will begin promptly at 7:30 am

### **Mixers**

During the ELITE program window, Mixers will be scheduled in the evening to bring together mentors and participants in an unstructured and open setting. These provide the opportunity to further build relationships, practice critical networking skills in a safe, friendly environment, expand discussions beyond the program content, and celebrate program achievements. Two mixers are planned.

### **Community Project**

Participants are expected to engage in a community project as part of the ELITE experience, putting these leadership skills in action. Multiple teams will be formed and some work outside of the sessions will be required to complete the projects. More details will be provided at the beginning of the program. Participation in the community project is required for successful completion of this program.

### **Slack Online Community**

ELITE includes a dedicated Slack channel for the use of the Participants and Mentors. This forum is leveraged for communication of logistical information and continues the conversation outside of the face to face meetings. In the channel, one can ask for advice, contribute to a discussion, plan the community project, promote a mention a job opening or build relationships with other ELITE members. Information about pre-work, related materials and any class changes will be communicated through Slack. Each person will be provided a personalized login to the channel which will be active throughout the program. The Slack Channel link will be provided when the Cohort begins.

### **Meeting Locations**

All Training Sessions and Practicums will be held at Tech Hill Commons. NTC reserves the right to change the location if necessary. Mixer locations will be provided via invitation to participants and mentors.

Tech Hill Commons  
500 Interstate Blvd  
Nashville, TN 37210

## 2021 Meeting Schedule

Session	Topic / Description*
<b>Kickoff / Training 1</b> August 26, 2021 7:30 – 4:00 pm	<b>Program Kickoff and How to Communicate with Absolutely Anyone</b> Get to know your fellow cohort members, review program expectations, learn the four languages that you and others use to communicate, and unlock the secrets of motivation.
<b>Mixer (Practicum 1)</b> September 2, 2021 Time: 5:00 – 7:00 pm	Use the skills gained in the first training session to network with ELITE participants, ELITE program mentors, and the ELITE Leadership Committee.
<b>Training 2</b> September 16, 2021 7:30 – 10:00 am	<b>How to Build High Performing Teams</b> Learn how to recognize and build the right ingredients into your team so you can supercharge your team performance. It's simple, but it's not easy. Master this and you will be able to build high performing teams over and over.
<b>Practicum 2</b> September 23, 2021 7:30 – 10:00 am	Share with mentors and your peers your challenges building and leading a team, gaining insights on approaches that might help improve your team cohesion and effectiveness
<b>Training 3</b> September 30, 2021 7:30 – 10:00 am	<b>How to Get Out of the Weeds so You Can Lead</b> How to effectively coach, develop and delegate to those around you so you can lead. How to be the leader that will make be highly successful and known for getting the job done.
<b>Practicum 3</b> October 7, 2021 7:30 – 10:00 am	Reflect on the level of control, monitoring and delegation to use in different situations including how to course correct mid-stream and learn from mistakes
<b>Training 4</b> October 14, 2021 7:30 – 10:00 am	<b>How to Lead Change that doesn't fail</b> We rarely consider the human element of change yet that is what messes up our change plans. It turns out the brain processes change the same way every time. When you master the stages of change, it impacts how you lead yourself and others through change.
<b>Practicum 4</b> October 21, 2021 7:30 – 10:00 am	Examine the changes affecting you and those around you and engage with peers and mentors to brainstorm specific ideas on how to work through and possibly ease the transition
<b>Training 5</b> October 28, 2021 7:30 – 10:00 am	<b>How to Do It All and Not Lose Your Mind</b> How to set goals, manage priorities, be strategic, lead meetings and stay conscious through the whole process. It's not just about completing tasks. How can you attend to the relationships that matter most in the work that you do?
<b>Practicum 5</b> November 4, 2021 7:30 – 10:00 am	Discuss with peers and mentors some of the toughest challenges of leadership and design your plan to make sure that the most important things are getting the attention they deserve
<b>Mixer – End of Cohort Celebration</b> November 11, 2021 Time: 5:00 – 7:00 pm	Program conclusion and celebration.

\*Topics and content subject to change dependent upon insights gathered from a review of the 2021 Cohort Participants' goals.

### CONTACT

For questions and information concerning the ELITE Program and/or NTC membership, please contact Dominique Butts at [dominique.butts@technologycouncil.com](mailto:dominique.butts@technologycouncil.com).