



Leadership Excellence Program

A program for leaders who want to create sustainable success through fact-based, improvement-driven, and people-centered leadership

In today's fast-changing and increasingly unpredictable world, the core responsibility of leadership is to build organizations that learn, improve, and adapt every day. True agility requires leaders who are present, guided by strong values, and skilled at coaching and supporting employees in improving their work and processes. This demands not only solid knowledge of systematic improvement methodology, fact-based problem solving, and operational excellence, but also a deep understanding of how people are motivated, led, and developed.

During the Sandholm Associates Executive Excellence Program, participants are trained in a powerful, improvement-based leadership approach built on Quality Management and Operational Excellence. The program is delivered in small groups using experience-based learning methods at Casa das Descobertas in northern Portugal, a unique arena designed for focused learning, reflection, and inspiration. Its harmony, natural beauty, and distance from everyday distractions enable participants to think more clearly, develop more deeply, and exchange insights in a meaningful way.

Purpose

This program is for leaders who want to take a big step toward value-creating, agile, and effective leadership, build organizations prepared for the future, and achieve sustainable excellence.

Who should attend?

Leaders in executive positions.

Language

English (a version in Swedish is also available)

Documentation

Articles and PDF copies of PowerPoint slides.

Additional information

The training is delivered through lectures, discussions, and small-group exercises. It is structured as a blended learning model that combines in-person sessions with online training to optimize learning outcomes. All elements aim to maximize participants' development as high-quality leaders.

The training is conducted by highly experienced consultants from Sandholm Associates under the lead of Dr. Lars Sorqvist, an international thought leader in quality management and business excellence

Course duration

Before the training week, participants take two one-day online pre-training modules. Individual online interviews are also carried out with all participants to understand their management situation and identify their personal needs.

The training week at Casa das Descobertas is a five-day training. The participants arrive the weekend before and depart the weekend after. Social activities are included in the program. After the training week, participants meet in a half-day online workshop. Individual online coaching is available

Location of the training

This training week is given at Sandholm Associates' training center, Casa das Descobertas, in northern Portugal. The participants fly to Porto. More information at www.casadasdescobertas.com

Accommodation and transportation

Double rooms, food, beverages, the social program, and local transportation are included.

Maximum number of participants

14 persons in double rooms or 7 persons in single rooms



Course Outline – Executive Excellence Program

Pre-training (online) – (2 one-day lectures)

During pre-training, participants will develop an understanding of quality management, continuous improvement, and the development of agile organizations. The focus is on understanding today's business challenges in a fast-changing, unpredictable world. We also discuss how a successful, value-creating improvement program could be built on Six Sigma and Lean.

Content:

- Value creation, customers, and customer needs – the foundation for success and existence
- Accelerating change and the need for agile organizations
- Developing agility through continual improvements
- A new perspective on leadership grounded in excellence and quality
- Management of improvements – strategy, infrastructure, and methodology
- Waste and cost of poor quality created huge possibilities to improve
- Sustainable development and long-term success
- Systematic improvement work through Six Sigma and Lean
- Leadership for improvements and the new executive role

Individual interviews (1 to 2 hours per participant)

Before the training week at Casa das Descobertas, each participant is interviewed individually online. The purpose is to understand each participant's specific situation and needs and to begin forming individual development plans.

Training week at Casa das Descobertas (5 days of lectures and discussions)

The majority of the training is conducted in person at Sandholm Associates' training center, Casa das Descobertas, in northern Portugal. In a unique, harmonious, and inspiring environment, participants learn improvement-driven, agile leadership through the latest pedagogical methods. Focus is on developing leadership skills grounded in quality, value creation, continuous improvement, and employee involvement.

Content:

- Welcome and introduction
- To be an agile manager and leader in a fast-changing world
- Leading for Excellence – Introduction to Sandholm Associates leadership model.
- Holistic perspective on strategy, structure, and culture
- Core values, good behaviors, and guiding principles
- Leading on different system levels – managing people and organizations
- Building organizational structure and culture
- Management, leadership, and development of good employeeship
- Human motivation, management of change, and respect for people
- Building trust and involving people through a quality culture
- The leader as a role model and the role of daily management
- Communication – informing, listening, and giving feedback
- Management of knowledge and becoming a learning organization
- Cross-functional management and process orientation
- Supplier management and building external partnerships
- Managing financial, legal, and relational contracts
- Management of sustainability and environmental challenges
- Digitalization, AI, and new technology with a focus on customer value
- Managing the development of new technology
- Strategic planning and succeeding as an executive leader
- Summary and closing ceremony



Post-program learning survey

Two weeks after the training week at Casa das Descobertas ends, we administer an online survey to all participants. The focus is to identify questions and reflections that have arisen after the program. This will be input to the follow-up workshop.

Follow-up workshop (one day online)

Around one month after the training at Casa das Descobertas, participants meet online for follow-up discussions and further training. The workshop program is designed based on findings from the post-program learning survey. The purpose is to take the learning of the Executive Excellence Program to the highest possible level.

Individual coaching

After the program, we offer each participant up to 4 hours of free online coaching. Additional coaching and long-term mentorship are available for an additional fee.

Local internal training activities

If participants need internal support to train their management teams, managers at all levels, business and operational excellence specialists, and employees, Sandholm Associates can provide training and consulting. Feel free to contact us for more information regarding content and costs.