

Leading from the Middle

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Room code: 4006

The Big Opportunity



Felicia Jeffery, LPC
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A Future Focused on Access, Care, and Community Well-being



Mission

To provide accessible, efficient and quality services to support the independent and healthy living of those we serve



Vision

Better community healthcare promoting healthy living



Focus

A Focus on Access, Provision, and Expansion of Services



Excellence



Improving Population Health

- Risk management pooling
- Preventive Care
- Socio-economically impactful

Reducing Cost of Care

- Productivity
- Sustainability
- Cost effective
- Comparatively effective

Quadruple Aim

Patient Experience

- Patient Satisfaction
- Outcomes
- Quality
- Safety

Provider Experience

- Provider Satisfaction
- Work/Life Balance
- Workflow optimization

What is a CEO responsible for?

Culture, People and Numbers



Culture

Strengthening values, collaboration, and innovation

People

Enhancing staff efficiency, reducing burnout, and improving care

Numbers

Increasing productivity, optimizing financial outcomes, and ensuring compliance



Kotter's Change Model



Survive

Reacting • Overwhelmed • Maintaining the status quo



Thrive

Purpose-driven • Innovative • Confident • Future-focused

GCC chooses to **THRIVE** — together.



Living Out Our Values

Our values are part of our DNA, intricately woven into who we are & how we serve

H

Humanity

Creates more time for
person-centered care

E

Excellence

Boosts operational
efficiency and
innovation

A

Accountability

Ensures compliance
and quality assurance

L

Loyalty

Supports family
involvement through
accurate records

T

Teamwork

Enhances
collaboration and
documentation
transparency

H

Honor

Promotes self-
direction and
continuous learning

Y

You

Strengthens
community
partnerships with
data-driven insights



Leadership culture can't be mandated.

It must be built, measured, and modeled.



Middle leaders are the **leverage point for culture change.**

TRANSLATE

Strategy



**Daily
Behavior**

They turn organizational strategy into the actions teams take every day.

SHAPE

**Employee
Experience**



Every Day

They define what it feels like to work here—through every interaction.

DETERMINE

Consistent Culture

or

**Fragmented
Culture**

They decide whether culture is lived the same way across every team.



Across community centers, we are seeing:

Increased workforce strain

Teams are stretched thin with growing complexity and fewer resources.

Rising expectations for leaders

Leaders are asked to do more with less clarity on how to lead effectively.

Pressure to improve retention, engagement, and outcomes

The bar keeps rising while systems stay the same.

AND...

Leadership development efforts that don't “stick”



Today, we'll walk you through:

1

**The
Challenge**

2

**The
Response**

3

The Data

4

The Model

5

**Your
Application**

OUTCOME

A practical, measurable approach you can adapt in your Center



Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

DEFINE

how a structured, data-informed approach
strengthens leadership
culture

IDENTIFY

core principles and tools
that make development
scalable

APPLY

a readiness self-check for
your own organization



The Challenge: Why Middle Leadership Matters



The Reality of Middle Leadership

Middle leaders sit at the intersection of:

Strategy



Execution

They bridge the gap between organizational vision and what happens on the ground every day.

Leadership



Frontline Staff

They translate senior direction into guidance that frontline teams can act on.

Change



Stability

They hold the tension between driving new initiatives and keeping day-to-day operations steady.

Where the **Disconnect** Happens

Three patterns that hold organizations back

1

Promotion Without Preparation

Strong individual contributors get promoted into leadership roles based on technical skill, not leadership readiness. They're expected to lead without the tools to do so.

2

No Clear Leadership Playbook

New leaders lack a shared framework for what “good leadership” looks like. Without clear guidance, they default to instinct—and the results are inconsistent.

3

Inconsistent Team Experiences

Without shared expectations, every team operates differently. Accountability, coaching quality, and culture vary widely depending on who's in charge.



The Impact

When middle leadership is underdeveloped, the effects ripple across the entire organization

1 Inconsistent Team Experiences

Teams get vastly different leadership depending on who manages them, creating uneven culture and morale across the organization.

2 Reduced Accountability

Without clear leadership standards, expectations go unenforced. Performance issues linger and ownership becomes unclear.

3 Lower Engagement and Retention

People don't leave organizations, they leave managers. Underprepared leaders drive disengagement and costly turnover.

4 Increased Leadership Strain

Senior leaders end up compensating for gaps below them—firefighting instead of focusing on strategy and long-term direction.



Lived Experience

“ Before GCC LEADS...

Leadership often felt reactive.

Coaching wasn't consistent.

Expectations weren't always clear.

And development felt... undefined.

— Amanda, GCC Leader



Problem Statement

1

The Problem

Leadership language, behaviors,
and expectations were not
consistently defined, developed, or
measured

2

The Impact

Middle leaders, their teams, and
ultimately, the people GCC serves

3

The Result

Inconsistency in culture,
performance, and engagement



The Response: GCC's Leadership Development Journey



Strategic Decision

We made a deliberate shift:

FROM

**One-time,
event-based
training**

Isolated workshops
without follow-through,
inconsistent expectations,
and no way to measure
impact



TO

**Structured
leadership
development**

Cohort-based, ongoing
development with shared
language, real-world
application, and integrated
measurement



Design Principles

What guided our approach:

01

Leverage Middle Leaders

Focus development where it has the greatest ripple effect across the organization

02

Shared Language

Build shared leadership language and expectations so every leader operates from the same foundation

03

Behavior Change

Design for real behavior change through practice and application, not just knowledge transfer

04

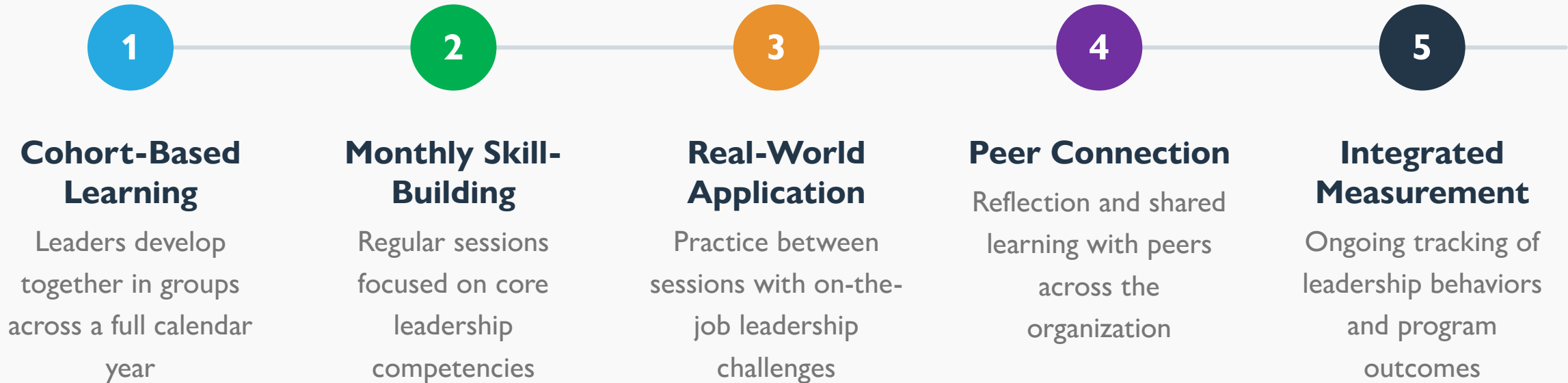
Measure What Matters

Track observable leadership behaviors and outcomes to continuously improve the program



Program Structure

Key components spread over a full calendar year:



What Made It Stick

Four critical elements:



Clarity

What good leadership looks like



Connection

Prioritized trust and developing people



Consistency

Reinforced over time across teams



Accountability & Growth

Measured and iteratively improved



Scale

In Year 1:

76

Leaders Developed



Multiple Program Areas

Represented across the organization



Cross-Functional Alignment

Created across teams and departments



The Data Story: Measuring Leadership Impact



Measurement Approach

We measured leadership in two ways:

Quantitative

Observable behavior trends — tracking measurable shifts in leadership actions over time

Qualitative

Lived leader experience — capturing how leaders describe their own growth and development



What We Measured

Skill areas:

-  **Connection & Presence**
-  **Strategic Thinking**
-  **Getting Work Done Through Others**
-  **Coaching & Feedback**
-  **Agility, Flexibility & Resilience**

Two lenses:

Program Participant

Middle leaders self-assessing their own skill competence

Direct Reports

Team members rating their leader's skill competence



Quantitative Results

- Leadership behaviors improved over time
- Consistent upward trends across key competencies

Skill Area	Pre	Post	Δ Change	Interpretation
Connection & Presence	4.27	4.22	-0.05	Stable, high baseline maintained
Strategic Thinking	4.09	4.18	+0.09	Moderate improvement
Getting Work Done Through Others	4.02	4.08	+0.06	Mild improvement
Coaching & Feedback	3.94	4.09	+0.15	Strong, meaningful improvement
Agility, Flexibility, & Resilience	4.03	4.04	+0.01	Stable, consistent strength



Qualitative Insights

Leaders reported:

- **Increased confidence** in coaching conversations and giving feedback
- **Clearer expectations** for team performance and accountability
- **Stronger team relationships** built through intentional connection
- **More consistent leadership practices** across daily interactions

Direct reports reported:

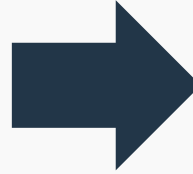
- **More coaching intervention** from their leaders on a regular basis
- **Increased leader EQ** — more empathy and self-awareness observed
- **Clearer communication** with improved clarity and consistency
- **Felt heard and safe** — respected and comfortable speaking up



Before vs After

Before

- **Reactive leadership**
Responding to issues as they arise
- **Inconsistent coaching**
Sporadic feedback without structure
- **Unclear expectations**
Ambiguous goals and performance standards



After

- **Intentional leadership**
Proactive, purpose-driven approach
- **Structured conversations**
Regular, meaningful coaching dialogue
- **Shared standards & expectations**
Clear, aligned goals across the team

Leadership culture became
visible and *measurable*



The Model:

Making Leadership Culture Measurable & Sustainable



The Core Problem

Most organizations:

Define culture aspirationally

Values are written on walls, shared in town halls, and printed in handbooks — but rarely connected to daily behavior

But do not operationalize it behaviorally

Without observable, measurable leadership behaviors, culture remains abstract and impossible to develop intentionally

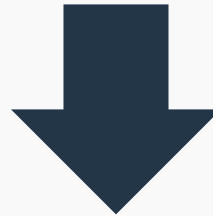


The Shift

FROM

Culture as values

Aspirational statements that live on posters and in handbooks



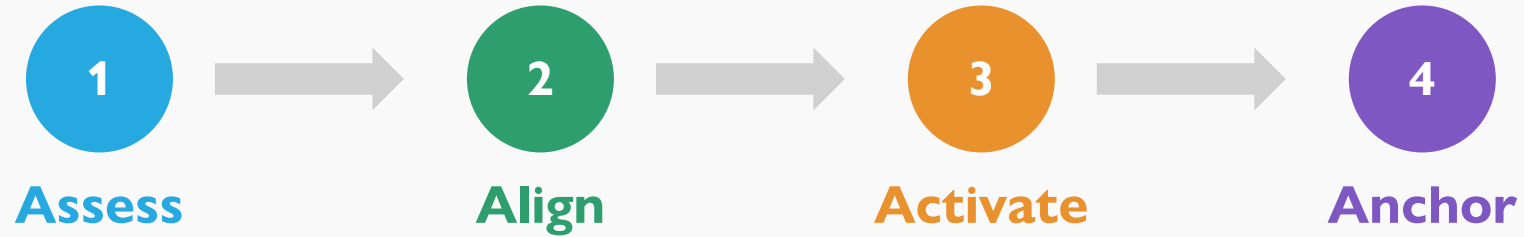
TO

Culture as observable leadership behaviors

Measurable actions that leaders practice and teams experience daily



Model Overview



The Model

1. Assess

Understand current state

- Leadership capability
- Gaps and inconsistencies
- Organizational needs

2. Align

Define what leadership looks like

- Shared expectations
- Clear behaviors
- Consistent language

3. Activate

Develop and practice

- Skill-building
- Real-world application
- Coaching and reflection

4. Anchor

Make it stick

- Measurement
- Reinforcement
- Integration into systems



Why This Works

Because it connects:

Strategy



Behavior

Learning



Practice

Culture



Measurement

Transferrable Principles

You don't need our program to do this (although we recommend it!).

You need:

- **Clarity**

Define what leadership looks like in observable terms

- **Structure**

Build a repeatable framework for development and practice

- **Reinforcement**

Embed behaviors into daily routines and team interactions

- **Measurement**

Track progress with data, not assumptions



Your Turn:

Leadership Culture Readiness



Leadership Culture Readiness **Self-Check**

Rate each area based on your current reality:

5

Consistently true

4

Often true

3

Sometimes true

2

Rarely true

1

Not true



**Individually reflect (3–4 min),
then discuss amongst yourselves.**

What Defines Leadership Culture Readiness?

Clarity

Do leaders know what “good” looks like?

- Shared expectations
- Defined behaviors
- Aligned to strategy

1–5

Connection

Do leaders build trust and develop people?

- Coaching conversations
- Psychological safety
- Trust & belonging

1–5

Consistency

Is leadership experienced similarly across teams?

- Feedback & accountability
- Leader onboarding
- Reinforced daily

1–5

Accountability & Growth

Is leadership measured and improved?

- Balanced accountability
- Reflection & measurement
- Data + growth stories

1–5



Reflect & Discuss

Which area scored highest?

What's sustaining it?

Which area scored lowest?

What's one action you can take to improve it?

What data or evidence do you have or need

to measure leadership culture?



Key Takeaways & Close



Key Takeaways



1

Middle leaders are the leverage point

They translate strategy into daily team experience

2

Leadership must be behaviorally defined

Observable actions, not abstract values

3

Culture can be measured and developed intentionally

Data-driven growth, not guesswork



Big Opportunities: What This Unlocks

For Your Organization

- Turn leadership from **inconsistent** → **intentional**
- Create a **shared leadership language** across teams
- Improve **retention**, **engagement**, and **team experience**
- Make culture **visible**, **measurable**, and **sustainable**

For Your Leaders

- Move from **reactive** to **proactive** leadership
- Build **confidence** and **competence** – in coaching, communication, and accountability
- **Strengthen trust**, clarity, and consistency daily

For Your System

- **Scale leadership development** beyond one-time training
- Embed leadership into **how work gets done**, not just how it's taught
- **Align strategy** → **behavior** → **outcomes**



Final Reflection

*If you could strengthen **ONE** aspect of leadership culture ...
what would it be?*

Closing

Leadership culture doesn't change *by chance*.
It changes *by design*.



A blurred background image showing three people in a professional setting. A woman with blonde hair is on the left, looking towards the center. A man with a beard and dark hair is in the center, looking towards the right. Another man is on the right, seen from the back/side, looking towards the center. They appear to be in a meeting or discussion.

Let's Talk

Questions / Discussion

What resonated most? What will you take forward?



Thank You!



We don't come to work
We Come to Care

