



Springfield
Regional
Chamber

Leadership Institute 2026

February - April 2026

Developing leadership
skills for personal,
organizational,
and community
development.

Springfield Leadership Institute Next-Gen Leadership

The Springfield Regional Chamber is proud to once again partner with Western New England University to offer a comprehensive on-ground leadership program designed to elevate the capabilities of both emerging and senior leaders in today's dynamic business landscape.

Participants will develop advanced skills in strategic thinking, decision-making, and change management while honing their abilities in effective communication and team building. The curriculum covers emerging issues such as AI, digital media, and business analytics in leadership and helps leaders to develop an organizational culture and personal mindset that fosters innovation, collaboration, and promoting ethical business practices.

This program is designed to empower executives to lead with confidence, vision, and integrity in increasingly complex and competitive environments. All sessions will be led by professors from Western New England University College of Business.

Sessions will be held on Thursdays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the TD Bank Conference Center, 1441 Main Street, Springfield unless otherwise noted.

APPLY TODAY



For any questions about the program, application process, or tuition, please contact:

Diana Szynal, President

413-755-1309 or

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Program Outline

February 19: Today's Leadership Challenge: Navigating Executive Leadership in a Complex World

This dynamic session explores what Next-Gen Leadership means and why these skills are essential in today's constantly changing organizations. Learn strategies to build agile, resilient cultures, manage resistance, foster innovation, and sustain engagement during change. Participants will assess their leadership competencies and develop personalized growth plans.

February 26: Strategic Agility: Thinking and Decision Making for the New Norm

In today's business world leaders are required to be increasingly strategic, analytical, and entrepreneurial. You will be introduced to leadership skills and tools which will help you enhance organizational agility, intensify mission focus, and increase operational efficiency and accountability through data-driven decision making.

March 5: Adaptive Leadership: Flexible Leadership Styles for Maximum Impact

Effective leaders recognize that one-size-fits-all approaches fall short in today's diverse and dynamic workplace. This session explores multiple leadership styles—from directive to coaching, participative to transformational—and teaches participants how to assess situations and adapt their approach accordingly.

March 12: Financial Mastery for Modern Leaders

Empower yourself with essential financial skills for strategic leadership. Explore key metrics, risk management, and capital strategies employed by today's successful business leaders. Understand how to interpret complex financial data and use that data to support strategic planning and everyday business decisions.

March 19: Strategic Marketing and Marketing Communication in a Digital Age

Leaders must communicate effectively within and beyond their organizations. This session covers advanced strategies for identifying target markets, crafting strong brand messages, and using multi-platform communication. Participants will also explore how to assess marketing effectiveness and avoid common digital pitfalls.

March 26: Leadership Presence

Master advanced public speaking and presentation skills for high-stakes environments. Learn to craft compelling narratives, project executive presence, and deliver persuasive messages. Refine vocal delivery, body language, and handling challenging questions with confidence.

April 2: Leading with AI: Strategic Leadership on an Audacious New Tech Frontier

Gain practical insights on leading in the evolving AI landscape. Explore AI's strategic impact, ethical and privacy challenges, and potential to drive success. Build leadership skills to identify AI opportunities, manage human-AI collaboration, and foster innovation with a human-centric approach.

April 9: Strategic Stakeholder Management and Influence Without Authority

Master the art of building coalitions and leading initiatives across organizational boundaries. Learn to map stakeholders, navigate competing priorities, and align diverse interests through persuasive communication. Using case studies and interactive exercises, participants will strengthen their negotiation, conflict resolution, and relationship-building skills—essential for leaders who achieve results through collaboration.

April 16: Strategic Problem-Solving - Advanced Frameworks for Business Leaders

Explore systematic approaches to complex business challenges using Next-Gen problem-solving tools. Strengthen critical thinking to identify root causes, craft innovative solutions, and apply best practices—laying the groundwork for the Institute capstone project.

April 23: Leadership in Action: Institute Capstone Project

Apply your new leadership skills to tackle real organizational challenges presented by industry partners. Work collaboratively with a mentor to develop actionable solutions, culminating in executive-level presentations at the Institute Graduation Reception.

April 30: Capstone Presentations and Graduation Reception at WNEU

Participants will present their Capstone Industry Challenge to a group that includes their sponsors and members of the Springfield Regional Chamber Board of Directors. These presentations will be followed by a graduation reception with refreshments. **(Graduation will be held at the Delbridge Career Center from 5:00 to 6:00 PM)**