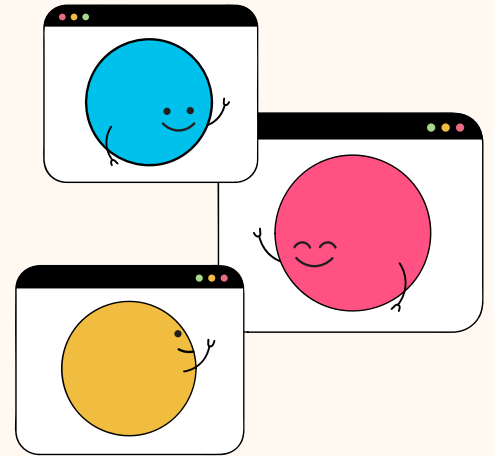


## CASE STUDY

# Empowering Emerging Managers at Providence -The Embark Journey



## About the Client

Providence is a mission-driven healthcare organization dedicated to improving the health and well-being of vulnerable populations. With a strong culture of collaboration, innovation, and compassion, Providence invests continuously in building people-centric leadership at every level.

## Background & Challenge

Providence identified a critical need: newly promoted managers - referred to as “Core Leaders - and high-potential individual contributors, were often stepping into leadership roles with less than a year of experience, or were on the cusp of taking charge of teams. These emerging managers needed not just functional skills, but also the mindset, behaviors, and practical tools to transition successfully from individual contributors to effective people leaders.

While Providence had previously delivered their manager learning journeys internally, they saw an opportunity to create even greater impact by partnering with FocusU to:

- Introduce a blended learning model (combining workshops, simulations, group coaching, and microlearning)
- Drive deeper behavioral shifts and measurable results over a sustained period
- Personalize and integrate the journey with on-the-job application

# Objectives

Providence identified that newly promoted managers often struggled with:



Understanding their evolving leadership role



Building trust and accountability within teams



Flexing leadership styles based on situations



Delegating effectively without abdicating responsibility



Providing constructive feedback and coaching for performance

There was a clear need for a structured and scalable learning journey that would not only build these skills but do so in a way that was experiential, continuous, and easy to track and measure.

## Objectives included:



Build foundational self-leadership and team-leadership skills among new managers and high-potential ICs



Create a learning journey that was experiential, continuous, and easy to track and measure



Equip managers to foster psychological safety, build trust, delegate effectively, and coach for performance



Enable real business impact through workplace projects and peer learning

# Solution

## A Four-Month, Blended Leadership Development Program

We co-designed and facilitated a four-month, integrated journey using a blended model, combining:



Skill Labs (Face-to-Face Workshops)



Microlearning & Reflection Assignments



Group Coaching Sessions



Workplace Projects & Application



Assessments & Impact Measurement

## Key Program Elements



### Skill Labs (In-Person Workshops)

#### Skill Lab 1: Leading Self

- Focus on self-awareness using Emergenetics (psychometric profiling)
- Building trust and accountability within teams

#### Skill Lab 2: Leading Teams

- Experiential business simulation (iLead) to practice leadership in action and delegation
- Understanding and flexing leadership styles

#### Skill Lab 3: Growing Team Members

- Giving and receiving feedback, coaching for performance
- Creating psychological safety

Each Skill Lab was spaced a month apart to maximize learning and real-world application.



## Microlearning Platform

- Between Skill Labs, participants engaged with a digital platform that delivered articles, videos, and assignments focused on applying new insights to their daily work.
- Subjective reflection questions encouraged managers to process what they learned and how they were practicing it.



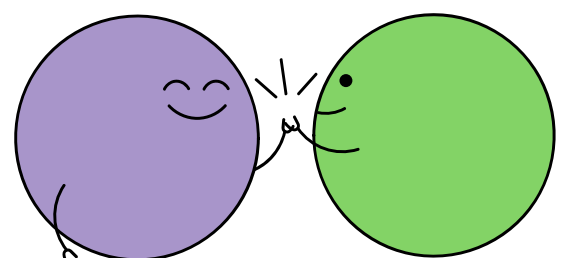
## Group Coaching

- Participants were divided into small peer cohorts (6–7 people).
- Facilitated group coaching sessions created a safe space for sharing real workplace challenges, discussing the application of learning, and exchanging peer advice.
- This approach fostered accountability, kept motivation high, and deepened learning through real-time feedback.



## Final Projects & Closure

- After the third Skill Lab, each participant selected a real workplace project to apply the learnings from the journey.
- Four weeks later, participants presented their project stories in small groups, detailing their problem statement, actions taken, results, and key takeaways.
- This peer learning and storytelling approach ensured that new behaviors were truly embedded and celebrated.





## Results & Impact

- **Stronger Leadership Identity:**  
Participants gained clarity on their evolving leadership roles and developed confidence to step up as people leaders.
- **Behavioral Shifts:**  
Notable improvements in accountability, team management, feedback delivery, and delegation.
- **Practical, Applicable Tools:**  
Managers actively used frameworks like GROW, SBI Feedback Model, and Emergenetics in their daily work.
- **Peer Learning & Engagement:**  
Group coaching and final project presentations created a culture of sharing, support, and reflection across functions.

The Embark 4 program was designed to ensure participants could immediately apply new skills and frameworks to their roles. Structured LMS activities and reflection assignments prompted participants to take action on key learning themes, such as self-awareness, leadership styles, delegation, building trust, and feedback, leading to meaningful shifts in workplace behavior.

## Key Examples of Application and Impact:



### Building Assertiveness While Fostering Team Empowerment

Early in the journey, participants used the Emergenetics psychometric tool to gain a deeper understanding of their own behavioral preferences and leadership tendencies. As they reflected on their individual Emergenetics reports, many recognized areas where they wished to grow, such as balancing assertiveness with inclusivity. This helped focus on building self-awareness: identifying specific leadership attributes (like assertiveness) they wanted to strengthen, while also appreciating the importance of creating space for diverse viewpoints within their teams. This reflective process helped participants set clear intentions for their ongoing leadership development, laying the groundwork for more inclusive and empowered teams in the future.



## Strengthening Belonging and Ownership

Several managers consciously shifted their approach to signal greater connection and belonging within their teams. This included intentionally building friendly relationships, sharing personal experiences, and making feedback a two-way conversation. When team members struggled - such as in cases where someone repeatedly received negative feedback - managers responded by exploring underlying causes and providing alternative opportunities, rather than rushing to judgment. This helped team members feel supported and increased their willingness to take ownership of their work.



## Adapting Leadership Styles for Greater Engagement

The program encouraged participants to reflect on their natural leadership style and experiment with new approaches based on situational needs. For instance, when direct, directive leadership failed to engage a new team member, one manager successfully shifted to a partnering style, involving the individual in brainstorming and ideation. This led to higher engagement and demonstrated the value of flexible leadership.



## Applying Delegation Frameworks to Improve Accountability

Managers began to apply structured delegation frameworks from the program, such as clarifying expectations, explaining the 'why' behind tasks, and offering ongoing support. They also became more aware of the risks of "abdication" (handing off tasks without guidance or follow-up) and made deliberate efforts to monitor progress, provide autonomy with accountability, and celebrate both successes and learning moments.



## Constructive Feedback and Communication Skills

Learners used models like SBI (Situation-Behavior-Impact) to provide clear, actionable feedback. This led to reduced repetition of errors, improved team communication, and more open discussions around mistakes and growth areas. Participants also emphasized making feedback collaborative - giving and receiving - rather than one-sided.



## Navigating Bias and Promoting Fairness

The program's focus on self-awareness helped managers identify and address their own biases, such as "in-group" favoritism. By encouraging more open dialogue and equitable delegation, they promoted inclusion and enhanced overall team performance and trust.



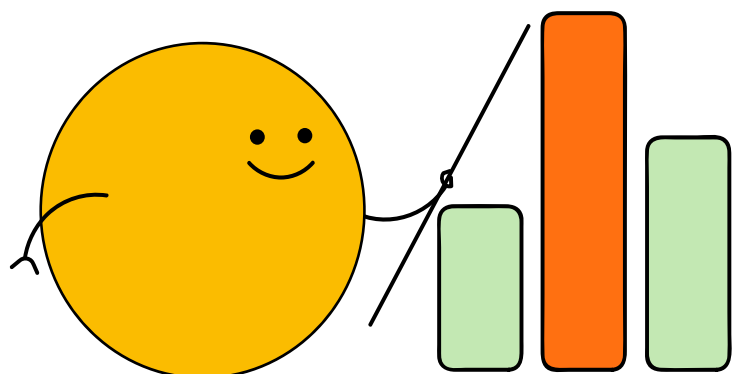
## Improving Time Management and Productivity

Managers reported adopting practical time management techniques - prioritizing tasks, allocating time buffers, and staying proactive with planning - which allowed them to meet deadlines, support their teams, and invest in their own growth.

## Summary

Through targeted reflection, guided assignments, and ongoing peer discussion, managers in the Embark 4 journey moved beyond theory to tangible behavioral change. They learned to flex their leadership styles, build trust, empower teams, and communicate more effectively - resulting in measurable improvements in engagement, ownership, and overall team effectiveness.

The post-session LMS activities played a pivotal role in bridging the gap between classroom learning and daily leadership practice, supporting continuous growth well beyond the formal end of the program.





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