

GSBA Leadership Institute 2026 Syllabus

Session 1 – January 22 (8:30am-10:30am)

Orientation + Communication Skills (Deaunte Damper)

- Get oriented with the program structure and expectations
- Build connections with fellow participants
- Learn strategies for effective communication in leadership

Session 2 – February 19 (8:30am-10:30am)

Intro & Leadership Test (Danny Cords)

- Complete the Leadership Assessment
- Gain insight into their individual leadership styles
- Begin exploring how personal values shape leadership

Session 3 – March 19 (8:30am-10:30am)

Results Review & Feedback (Danny Cords)

- Review their Leadership Test results
- Learn to apply feedback constructively
- Strengthen self-awareness as leaders

Session 4 – April 16 (Afternoon, 4–6 PM)

Unconscious Bias (Justice Mary Yu)

- Understand how unconscious bias affects workplace interactions
- Identify strategies to mitigate bias in leadership
- Engage in critical dialogue on equity and inclusion

Session 5 – May 21 (8:30am-10:30am)

Influential Leadership (Roby Schapira)

- Learn how to build influence across teams
- Practice strategies for motivating and inspiring others
- Explore the importance of vulnerability-based trust

Session 6 – July 16 (8:30am-10:30am)

The Value of Core Values (Emily Nee, Brooks)

- Discover the power of defining personal core values
- Understand how organizational values drive culture
- Align individual and team values for success



Session 7 – August 20 (8:30am-10:30am)

Wisdom and Insights as an LGBTQ+ Professional Leader (Nicki McCraw, Retired Vice President of Human Resources & Experienced Attorney; Kevin Spratt, Founder and Strategic Advisor, Precision Garage Door Service)

- How has authenticity impacted your career and relationships?
- How has seeing LGBTQ+ leaders influenced your own path?
- What is one career lesson you wish you had learned earlier?

Session 8 – September 17 (8:30am-10:30am)

Performance Reviews & Successful Negotiations (Sam Affinito, Comcast)

- Learn effective strategies for conducting performance reviews
- Build negotiation skills for professional success
- Explore how to balance advocacy and collaboration

Session 9 – October 15 (12–2 PM)

Graduation Ceremony – Imperia Lake Union (Facilitated by GSBA Leadership Team)

- Celebrate completion of the Leadership Institute
- Reflect on their leadership journey
- Join the Alumni Network for continued growth and connection

