

Michelle Ockers:

Welcome to today's Learning Uncut Conversation. We are talking with Matthew Peade from TFE Hotels and exploring their award-winning People Leaders Program, which is part of their Global Academy Leadership Platform. Before we kick off, I'd like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia and the connection to land, sea, and country. I'm coming to you from the lands of the Brinja-Yuin people. And Michelle?

Michelle Parry-Slater:

Hello, welcome. It's wonderful to be speaking to you from the lands of the Kombumerri people today.

Michelle Ockers:

And of course, Michelle Parry-Slater and I are co-hosting this conversation with Matthew Peade. Welcome, Matt.

Matthew Peade:

Hi, thanks for having me. Excited to be here and I'm looking forward to sharing our story around our leadership development programs.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

Wonderful. Well, it'd be good to have a little bit of a context around that story, Matt. So could you just tell us a little bit, just a little bit about the hotel group that you're working with, the TFE Hotels and what the organisation does, who does it serve? What's the nature of your workforce there?

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, sure. TFE Hotels is Australia's international hotel group. So we have 70 hotels across Australia and New Zealand and Europe, and we're headquartered in Sydney. Across the portfolio, we've got around about 2,500 team members, and we're a growing business, I guess, in an exciting industry with a great growth trajectory.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

And how about for yourself, Matt? So what's your personal journey into the hotel business? I believe that you started your career as a chef. Do you want to tell us a little bit about how you ended up cheffing into L&D?

Learning Uncut Episode 180

When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, that's true. That's sort of a, I guess it's a layered career. I'm always in the hospitality industry, but yeah, I started my apprenticeship actually when I was 16, which is quite a long time ago now, but completed a full apprenticeship and spent a lot of time working in fine dining restaurants in Sydney, London, had some time in Canada. And I learned and overall it's about a 17 year career working in commercial kitchens. And I really enjoyed that. And at some point I started doing some teaching and training within the hospitality sector, you know, TAFEs and private colleges and things like that. And I thought it'd be a good idea to maybe transition careers. I was around about 30 at that point in time and both of my parents were teachers. I undertook a teaching degree, a Bachelor of Education. I completed that whilst, you know, still working full time as a chef. And I got a job at a high school. But, you know, there was a bit of, I guess, in reflection, a bit of a culture shock. Started at the high school and only really lasted a couple of weeks and thought that career is not necessarily for me and went back to vocational education and, you know, applied those skills, but teaching hospitality and sort of progressed through the vocational and higher education system with William Blue, which is part of Think Colleges and now Torrance University, and also did a degree in online learning at that point in time. That was kind of when e-learning and online learning was coming into the fold and started running the vocational programs, contributing to the higher education programs there as well. So it sort of transitioned from operations into education. At that point in time, I got the opportunity to go and work in Macau, so special administration region of China there, and work for a large integrated resort as vice president of learning and development. So that was the opportunity to really transition from education into more of the workplace learning and performance area and spent eight and a half years working over there, great role, really enjoyed it and since then moved back to Australia and now I'm the director of L&OD with TFE Hotels. So, you know, it's one industry, but many layers. And I think they all sort of combine together really to give me, you know, a bit of a rounded balance in terms of understanding workplace learning, thinking a bit strategically and critically through higher ed and vocational. And yeah, that's basically my story and how I've ended up in L&OD, but always had a passion for hospitality right the way through that.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

Amazing lifelong learning, I love the fact that you're talking to us about walking the talk.

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, I think, you know, we've always preached that lifelong learning and continuing to learn. And sort of my journey has always just been layering career changes and education and qualifications along the way. Yeah, and actually now, well, I'm part way through a PhD in relation to strategic leadership in the hospitality industry. And, you know, that's another real challenge for me. I think it's some sort of form of mental torture, really, the PhD. But we'll see how we go. But I'm giving it a try. And, yeah, it's really sort of

Learning Uncut Episode 180

When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

opening my eyes into critical thinking and research and coming at things from the outside in and trying to create new knowledge that contributes and gives back to the industry as well.

Michelle Ockers:

So Matt, importantly, if we were to come to your place for dinner, what's your signature dish that you'd serve us up?

Matthew Peade:

I'm a bit of a stickler for traditional French cuisine and I like to have the food stick along the lines of the original cuisine. So probably beef tartare to start with and some sort of fish. I've always been passionate about seafood and cooking with food from the ocean as well.

Michelle Ockers:

Nice, I'll bring the fresh seafood.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

She's probably caught it herself out on her boat as well.

Michelle Ockers:

Yes.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

I really do love hearing where people have come to, because rarely do we sort of, when we're a child, say, oh, I want to work in learning and development. You know, it's just not what we sort of tend to hear young children saying. So to hear your story and to see how you've walked the walk, I think, is really inspiring, actually. But on to the business side of things. Obviously, working there at TFE Hotels, there was a business need or a challenge, and that's led to the creation of your People Leaders Program. So, it sits within your academy, and I'm just curious to know, really, what was the push? Why did you decide you needed a People Leaders Program?

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, absolutely. I think in the context of our industry, it's really set for ongoing growth and that's going to be driven by the visitor economy and just the real opportunity that the Australian hospitality industry has in the future to make the most of that. So we're setting ourselves up for ongoing growth and expansion. But within that context, To be honest, the industry has challenges around workforce constraints. We have issues sort of attracting, retaining talent. And we've had some issues in the past as well, broadly in the industry around, you know, reputational issues regarding employment practices. There's a big casualisation of the workforce happening. And with other industries as well, we've

Learning Uncut Episode 180

When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

got digital disruption coming and there's a bit of a demographic challenge as well. We mostly have younger workers. We've got an ageing population and we've also got competition from other sectors like mining, NDIS, etc. And we're a very competitive industry as well. We've got lots of competition on all different fronts and that sort of gives us a challenge around profit margins as well. So when we consider all of those elements and where we're going as a business, we need a consistent, stable pipeline of leaders. And that's sort of the genesis of the program, really, is how can we develop people leaders in-house to meet our needs into the future?

Michelle Parry-Slater:

The opportunities there that you've described are not just unique to your setting, but I like the fact that you're so aware of the wider context, the hospitality industry and other industries as well. So that feeds in really to the whole story. I'm going to hand over to Michelle. She's got some more questions really around the programme itself.

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, sure.

Michelle Ockers:

We like to look at the program from the experience of the participant being kind of learner-centred here. Can you walk us through what your People Leaders program looks like, what the experience is for a participant?

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, absolutely. I think from a design perspective and a learning perspective, we focus on three key streams. So the first one's around experience. So that's how our leaders get experience on the job, learning as a leader, they're coached by their manager directly in that setting and they also undertake a series of key business change projects through the duration of the 12-month program. The second sort of learning stream there is around networking. And we know that people learn from peers and others, and they're assigned a dedicated mentor for the program, which we match up based on their sort of career goals, look for someone who can give them cross-regional exposure as well. And that mentor is dedicated to that leader throughout the 12-month duration of the program. And then the third stream is more around the formal learning where we conduct webinars, which are led by our leaders in the business, along with e-learning, other online learning platforms and short courses to kind of bridge the gap. So to give you a bit of an idea of a typical intake, if we bring in 25 team members to our People Leaders program, we may involve another 80 leaders across the business as part of their learning and development activities because we'll be running, you know, 10 topics of webinars throughout the course of the year. Everyone will be assigned a mentor as well and also at the same time each leader has a coach, their direct manager who supports them through the program. So from our perspective in L&OD team, we like to think of ourselves as a bit

Learning Uncut Episode 180

When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

of sort of a conductor in the orchestra and bringing people together across the organisation to support the learning. We're a dynamic organisation, constantly changing. We also recognise that leadership development is complex, it's multifaceted. People learn individually and they also learn collectively. And our key principle is really that leaders develop leaders. So when we tie all those things together, that kind of brings our program together. And then we sort of structure it as well as in terms of what the leaders do. So we commence the program with high impact skills that they can apply on the job. So that might be communication, feedback, presentation skills. And then we go into, well, how do leaders think and behave? We'll do some personality profiling, challenge their assumptions, encourage them to think about their unique characteristics and drivers. And then we roll that together with, you know, Why do they choose to act? Where we align it with the purpose, vision, and values of the organisation. So the design is sort of anchored in that concept around what leaders can do, how they think and behave, and why they choose to act. And when we combine sort of competency, mindset, skills, purpose, and behaviour, that's where we can, we believe, create that sort of unified capability leadership development.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

It's a very well thought out program, Matt. And I'm really struck by the fact that you said 25 people intake 80 senior leaders across the organisation. I know there's listeners thinking, how did he get them involved? That's a huge amount of motivation and engagement from them. So just talk us through, like, what have you done to those leaders to make them so enthusiastic for your program? Because sometimes we find it hard to get managers even to accept people in their team to go for learning and development. So yeah, give us a secret sauce.

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, I think there's some part of that is embedded in the culture of the organisation that it is a role and responsibility of leaders to develop others. We do promote the program really well. We have top level sponsorship from the C-suite down and we're pretty clear that everyone has a key, so if you come on board we'll talk about the academy program and your role that you will play in it in the future. Yeah, and we break that down in terms of, you know, the team member has to drive their own learning. The direct manager is a coach. If their team member comes on the program, people in capability link the business and us together. And then the regional leaders and the executive team, they provide oversight, governance, unlock roadblocks and support the business projects. So our role is really continually, I guess, collaborating across the business to bring all that together. And leaders also facilitate the webinars as well, the sort of monthly topics that we run alongside us. And I think it's really good for them as well, because it gives them that sort of concept of enterprise thinking, the opportunity to think more broadly, meet more people across the business. So we sell it as a win-win. And we try and make it easy for them as well to participate. Lots of time spent sort of briefing them, getting them

Learning Uncut Episode 180

When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

ready, aligning their background skills, knowledge to what they're going to talk about. So everything is sort of a real authentic, genuine approach. We don't ask them to deliver too much theory. We look at what the theory or the concepts are. We link that to their experience and then we give them the opportunity to tell a story.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

Huge capability matching you've got going on there.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah, it is. It's massive. And I can see why you call yourself the conductor in the orchestra here. Connecting people, creating the environment for people to partake in the learning rather than being the one facilitating everything and being at the center of everything.

Matthew Peade:

That's right. And I think when you think about sort of leadership capability around those three different fronts, you really need that holistic approach to think that, you know, that someone can develop skills, they can change or shape their mindset, reflect on who they are, and grow as a person. And also, as an individual, but as a collective, we're able to align people to the purpose, vision and values of the organisation. And everyone needs to be sort of on board and working together for that to occur. And then you really do, I think, have an impact on the culture. And people look forward to the program and they're all part of it. So everyone wants it to succeed.

Michelle Ockers:

So Matt, you talked about team members being expected to drive their own learning, and that's one of the messages you send to them, the expectations you set. Often people can struggle, even if they've been told it's your job to drive your own learning, it's an expectation, they can struggle with time and permission and a sense of, here's the learning and development team telling me it's for me to drive my own learning, but I'm in a busy operational environment, maybe I'm working shift work, how am I going to get the time to do this? And does my manager agree that I've got the time to do it and so on? How do you actually ensure that people have the time and the permission to be able to drive their own learning?

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, absolutely. And I think that all starts with the selection and recruitment process of the program. So to be eligible to come on the program, you can nominate yourself or your manager can nominate you, but you're obviously then endorsed by the manager to go through the application process. There's a series of interviews and assessments to see if you have sort of that personal drive and motivation. And before the program commences, you know, the team member or the learner, the manager, and the regional managers are

Learning Uncut Episode 180

When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

briefed on the requirements and everyone's sort of clear on that. And we do have a dedicated support coach, Justine, who's in our team, who supports team members through that process. And I guess it's kind of autonomy within boundaries. You know, there's clear expectations about the program. We have milestones and deadlines, but we're flexible with that execution. Justine will have regular one-on-ones and catch-ups and assess their confidence, blockers, direction, and then we'll also have motivation in terms of we've got some group chats, we share what the guest speakers who are coming up, we share success stories of people who've graduated from the program, we have an element of sort of recognition and belonging as part of that program, so we'll celebrate birthdays, promotions, milestones, and also every topic has an assessment, and we'll provide feedback to that. But that feedback is really personalised in terms of where they are in the program, where they are as a leader, and how they can grow. So it's holistic in terms of trying to combine all those things together to give people, you know, the autonomy and the motivation to drive their own learning. It is considered around how we approach that and how we can make it happen.

Michelle Ockers:

So are people actually given time out as part of work shifts? Like, is there company time provided for them to engage in the program?

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, of course. Because, you know, like on average, we estimate between eight to 12 hours a month we spend on either the learning program, developing the projects, doing e-learning, you know, spending time with your mentor. So everything that takes place is in with within the work time and then there's a lot of other activities that integrated within the role in terms of people might have the opportunity to do a secondment or go off into another area of the business or join a meeting with senior team or when they're running their business project as well that's all part of you know general operations but also part of the program.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah, you mentioned the business change projects. Can you share a little bit more about those? What typically are those? What's the expectation? You know, how are they executed? What does that look like?

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, so as part of the program, each team member will run a business change project. So we kick that off by giving them some knowledge around project management and change management. So we run a bit of a masterclass on that, talk through some different methods they could use, you know, waterfall method or or the agile method. And then their goal is to have a look into the business and see where there's an area of improvement where they can initiate a change and make a difference. But that area of

Learning Uncut Episode 180 When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

improvement also aligns to the broader business strategy around sustainability, digital transformation, productivity, etc. They form up that project, they have it signed off by their manager and also the regional manager and resources are allocated if required. And then they work through the 12 month program in parallel, executing that project. Trying to make an impact in the business. And then that's a really good practical learning experience as well.

Michelle Ockers:

And what are examples of some of the projects that people have been able to deliver with the support of the program?

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, so there's I mean, I'll just give you a few examples of a couple. One was in relation to sustainability just recently from a chef who was running the kitchen. And she looked at how they could make the kitchen more sustainable in terms of recycling lots of items or etc. And they were also able to raise some money from that and they gave that back to the Scouts Club. So there was a bit of a continuation in terms of corporate social responsibility. Some others have been around about how we improve service quality. So they might be conducting service audits, delivering training, following up on that, measuring the business impact. There could be others around upselling, you know, increasing revenue across different functions, or also productivity improvements where they're looking at how can I improve processes, systems, or the way things are working. So they're sort of big picture concepts, but they localise them in their particular hotel or property. And, you know, there's a timeline around that as well. So they're manageable. And sometimes those projects spur into other ongoing business projects across the organisation as well.

Michelle Ockers:

I'm loving the practicality and application, Michelle.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

Same. I was just thinking about how much that practical application, you've got somebody doing a sustainability project. Are they aware, the people around them, are they aware that that's part of this program? Is this is how the word is out, if you like, because I'm just really stunned by how much this permeates your culture. This seems to be very much, you know, what we do around here is we improve, we learn, we work on things that make us better. And are people talking about these projects? As part of my leadership program, I'm doing this project. I'm curious, like what's the language that's being talked about? Because it feels like a real campaign throughout the organisation.

Learning Uncut Episode 180 When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. I mean, if they're on the Academy program, they'll be profiled in the business. Everyone will be aware that they're on the program from the beginning. All the projects are listed and surfaced out, you know, onto our SharePoint and internal communication page. And the regional leaders also have oversight over the projects and other people might join that team member to help deliver the project as well. And at the end of the program everyone comes together for what we call a graduation ceremony, but that is the opportunity there where they present their learning across the whole program to all the leaders in the business. Not every leader, but all the leaders who've been involved in the program, you know, their direct managers, senior leaders, mentors and facilitators. And they also, you know, present the project outcomes from that and receive feedback. And it's an opportunity to see if that project will continue on or, you know, sort of just transitions into business as usual.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

It's an amazing amount of outcomes, success measures, that kind of evaluation that we're always talking about in learning and development. How do you evaluate the actual program? So not so much the projects that are coming out of it, but the program success itself. What does that look like for you?

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, so I think a few different levels to that. Obviously, part of that completing the program and the graduation, everyone has to pass all their assessments throughout the duration, complete their project and present their learning journey. So that's a really reflective piece in terms of all the capabilities that they've developed through the program in front of the leadership group. And then we have a target in the business to have 70% of our leadership positions filled internally. And what we aim for, for example, in 2024, the people who've graduated from the Academy program, 86% of those team members have received the promotion. And of the duration of the program, we've had 300 team members graduate, 132 are still with us, actively employed, and 40 of those are either hotel managers or assistant hotel managers. So I guess, you know, from a high level perspective, the outcomes are we're looking for these leaders to show up in our business in senior positions over a long period of time and shape and impact the culture, and also then be part of the learning journey with future people. Because they've already been through it, they know what it takes. They experience what it's like to have a leader support you or multiple leaders. And you know, that sort of just continues on that opportunity for continuous learning and that culture of leaders developing leaders. We're gonna look at some other scores, you know, engagement scores, team member collaboration, empowerment, and satisfaction around mentors and the program, and they all track well as well.

Learning Uncut Episode 180 When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

Michelle Parry-Slater:

See, that's so much of what we measure in L&D, you know, did you have a good time? Was it nice? Did you like your mentor? And that's important, but what you've described is so much more impactful, as well as important so the description around the culture if you if you're taking people through a program they are living your culture, and then they're managing hotels. Of course, the shadow falls from the leader you know this comes down to the rest of the people in the organisation. This is an amazing example of good evaluation in learning and development over a long period of time. So many times in L&D, we just measure very quickly. We just want to know, did you have a good time? Was it good? Did you learn something? What you've described, Matt, is the difference as to why we need to measure over a long period of time. I totally see why you won an award.

Matthew Peade:

Thank you. Well, it's not our award. I guess it's the organisation, the business and all the leaders who contributed to it. And yeah, I mean, once people graduate from the program, they're part of that academy alumni network. And we do track their progress and progression year after year and assign them other development opportunities and keep a real eye on that group. And we profile them in the business as well, whether that be on LinkedIn or our SharePoint page. And yeah, and then they do foster that next group of leaders to come through when they get to play the role of either the facilitator in the webinar the coach on the job or the mentor.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah. So Matt, there's one magic word that you haven't mentioned. And when I say magic, I don't necessarily mean this is the solution to things. It's the word that, or the place that L&D teams often start when they're thinking about development programs, and that's content. Oh, we need it. We're going to do leadership development, we need a content library. You know, it's often the first port of call or the first thing that pops into people's minds about what it's going to take to provide a leadership development program. You know, you did talk about the webinars, but you didn't talk about, you know, in these three streams, a content library or a lot of content. What's the role of content in your program?

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, so I think that's a good point to discuss as well. We have a few different, I guess, frameworks where we pull out content from in relation to that. And one is the Leadership Challenge book by Kouzes and Posner. That one's a bit of a central guidance. Everyone receives a copy of that. Then we have our TFE leadership capability framework, and that spans across a range of different capabilities from leading yourself, leading teams, leading the business, attracting and developing talent, influencing stakeholders. So from those two broad constructs, then we develop a series of 10 topics that run through the

Learning Uncut Episode 180

When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

program overall. And like I said, you know, we sort of start with what leaders do, right? So we talk about business communication, feedback, presentation skills, and then we move through to sort of how they behave and how they think about themselves. So there's some personality profiling, emotional intelligence components, and some reflective pieces in there in terms of what is your leadership personal brand in the future. Where are your strengths and drivers? So we combine that, you know, what do they do? How do they think? And then we integrate that with some topics around the purpose and vision and how that relates to where the organisation is going in the future. So some of those things can be around about our digital platforms, transformation projects that are taking place. And there's also a topic on continuous improvement in terms of how to make change. And then there's one other topic on sort of encouraging the heart and leading groups and teams and how to empower and delegate as well.

Michelle Ockers:

Are those sessions that are facilitated by the L&D team in addition to the webinars that are led by the leaders?

Matthew Peade:

They're the sessions that are facilitated by the L&OD team and the leaders. So we jump on a call together, I'll be the sort of the key lead facilitator in terms of the content, and then we'll have two business leaders who bring those concepts to life. And we have this very small group, so we might run five to 10 people max, and each team member needs to come to the session prepared with some talking points. We'll ask them to prepare some of their personal views on these issues. So it's a collaborative discussion as a group of leaders, as opposed to being too much sort of theory driven and one way conversation. And we ensure that everyone's done the preparation prior to that. So we can have a good structure to the discussion.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah, really nice experience for people and very respectful of people's experience and giving them the opportunity to really explore that, Michelle.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

It takes a village, doesn't it? They say to raise a community. And this is really what I'm hearing loud and proud that you're all putting together the collaboration. And I love the fact we talked about content at the end because it's important, but it's not the driver.

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, I mean, I think it is important. We develop all our content in-house. The whole program is run internally, 100%. Obviously, we borrow some concepts from leadership challenge and other sort of key theory constructs around emotional intelligence and the personalisation profiling surveys, etc. but everything's developed in-house and

Learning Uncut Episode 180

When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

contextualised to the business. And it's really dynamic as well. So we'll bring in things that are happening within the organisation at any particular time. And because we own and develop all that content, we can restructure and change it based on what's happening in the organisation, who the leader is that's coming in, still has the same general principles. And then each topic will, also have an assessment task where the team members have to complete that. Usually it's a reflective piece that combines a bit of application that they have to apply on the job and submit that and then, you know, that needs to be sort of assessed and feedback provided as well.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

Matt can we talk a little bit more about that reflection you've used that word a lot and it's a word that I think is really important in L&D, but perhaps something that's not built into programs it's almost expected that people learn something, and then they apply it back to their workplace by themselves. But what I'm hearing from this program is they're getting some content, they're getting an experience, particularly live on the job with the projects. And then you've also mentioned a few times there's a reflective piece, they submit their reflective piece. Can you help other people to understand what does that look like? What is a reflective piece? Is it, you know, you're like your PhD, is it ongoing essays or is it more?

Matthew Peade:

Well, yeah, I mean, we have we have a range of different sort of reflective activities that we structure. And with AI as well, we need to carefully construct those so people aren't just regurgitating information that's out there. So let me give you an example of one where a team member will have to interview their mentor about their leadership brand, styles, values, and what makes them a unique leader. And from that, they need to record that interview, And then they need to reflect on their own leadership style drivers and where they want to go and put a piece together in terms of, okay, what did I learn from that conversation? How does that relate to me? And where can I take that in the future? And therefore you've got something that's really personal and unique because you've talked to another leader in the business who's a unique person. You're combining it with your own unique views, you're reflecting on that around where you want to go in the future. That's powerful as well because there's value in it. There's value in it for the mentor as well to have to think about what is my leadership style? How am I going to communicate this to the team member in a way that supports their development? They also find that a learning experience having to prepare for the meeting and share within their reflections. So I think that's kind of the level of, it always has to come back to is, you know, what I've learned from this, but how does it apply to me? And how am I going to apply that in the future in the context of my career and this business and organisation?

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah. As an observation, Matt, the quality of this program and the soundness of the learning science underpinning all of this, it really does reflect and say something about the investment you have made in your own development over the years and how you're then really well positioned to design something of such pedagogical soundness, if I can use that word, that really works in your context as well. Michelle's nodding as well.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

Yeah, it's really robust and the quality is just shining through. Thank you so much for sharing this with everyone today.

Matthew Peade:

Oh, great. No worries. Thanks. I think I'm sort of combining, you know, workplace learning, you know, Bachelor of Ed, Master of Education, Diploma of Design, you know, all of those things over time and your road test things. But I think with this program, what I see is that you can't run away from it. Everyone's involved in it. Everybody's in the business. It's not something that happens off site. You show up to a hotel, you show up to the office, everybody's there. You get instant feedback around what works, what doesn't. You don't need to wait for a survey or as such to see, oh, is this program hitting the mark? People will tell you straight away. So it's just that sort of continual refinement around in real life, does this really work and how does it land?

Michelle Ockers:

It's so beautifully grounded in the organisational context and culture and the culture is feeding the program and the program is feeding the culture. It's just so sound. It's really easy to say why this program was awarded the Leadership Development Excellence Award from the AITD in 2025. Well done. So Matt, leadership development programs are one of the key initiatives that most L&D professionals are required to address in their organisation. So what advice would you have for our listeners on designing and supporting leadership development programs, particularly those working in high pressure industries, operational industries or with limited resources?

Matthew Peade:

Well, yeah, I mean, that's a good question. That's for sure. I think the solution in some parts is within, and it's going to take a bit of groundwork to get alignment really from the top of the organisation in terms of what are they trying to achieve? What are we trying to achieve as a business? What are the capabilities that are going to get us there? selling or telling that story to build support, that we need alignment across the organisation to support and develop this, and that everyone's role as a leader is to develop others, to think enterprise-wide, to think across boundaries. So I think there's a fair bit of sort of laying that groundwork in terms of mindset and concepts in the leadership, in the organisation. And then from there, it's probably just like thinking about those different facets of what

Learning Uncut Episode 180

When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

do we need the leader to do? How do we need to think How do we want them to think and behave? And how are we going to motivate them? Or why are they going to choose to act? And if you can then have some guiding principles around that, then you can further collaborate to see, well, what are some of the key topics or areas in each one of those that I can bring together across the course of a program? And I think, you know, depending on the level of leadership, like we have a strategic leadership program, which is for our C-suite and global leaders team. And we use an external partner for that to help us deliver it, but we partner closely as well. So I think it's also, you know, having a look at the cohort, the people, and really understanding what's going to be the best solution for them to make it land.

Michelle Ockers:

Yeah, so a lot of invaluable tuning in before you race to a solution there, Matt, both to the organisation and the people to get it right.

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, it's definitely spending a lot of time with the leaders in terms of discussion, planning and collaboration to really build support, but make sure you've done your needs analysis in a really thorough way.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

So what's next? What's next for the People Leaders Program? What's next for the sort of broader academy platform that you have at TFE Hotels?

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, I think our People Leaders Program, we're aiming to continue that ongoing each year, looking to really promote the graduates as well. And we have another program called the Future Leader Program, which is more around bringing individual contributor to an emerging leader. And that's on the job sort of rotation program as well, which is really successful. And I think using these programs as part of our EVP in the future, a bit more to potentially attract people who haven't worked in the industry before as you know, career paths and opportunities for them to come in. We need to bring in new people into the industry. That's one aspect. And I think one other area I'm really looking at in terms of leadership development is not only the development of the individual, but the development of key leadership teams across the organisation. So that might be sort of our strategic leader level and how do they function collectively as a team or the next level down in terms of our regional managers and directors and how do they all function from a cross-collaboration perspective. and share their capabilities, not only within the vertical that they manage, but within the horizontal across the enterprise. So I think that's our next evolution is how do we bring all these different programs together across the layers and build really high performing leadership teams as well as individuals.

Learning Uncut Episode 180 When Leaders Lead the Leadership Programme – Matthew Peade

Michelle Parry-Slater:

Thank you so much, Matt, for sharing your story today. I think this is a really perfect example of when you place learning and development directly squarely in the business need. You talked earlier about one of the reasons for this was challenges to workforce talent and the hospitality industry in general. And you've ended there with the fact that you're addressing that directly. You want to use this as part of your employee value proposition. It's attracting people to TFE hotels. And I'm more than sure that must be working because what a great story that you've shared. Thank you. I'm just going to make sure that everyone knows how to contact Matt. Are you happy for us to put your LinkedIn in our show notes?

Matthew Peade:

Yeah, absolutely. Love to get in touch with anyone who's listening and interested to learn more. Always happy to share insights and also looking forward to learning from others as well.

Michelle Parry-Slater:

Perfect, so get in touch with Matt. As I say, LinkedIn profile in the show notes, and do connect with each other as well, everyone who listens to the Learning Uncut podcast, and connect with Michelle and I, our LinkedIn's always available. Michelle, thank you so much for all of your insightful questions today, but Matt, thank you for sharing this amazing story with all of the listeners of Learning Uncut. Until next time, then we will see you online.



Learning Uncut are learning and development consultants that help Learning and Development leaders and their teams become a strategic enabler so that their businesses can thrive. We work in evidence-informed ways to drive tangible outcomes and business impact and are strong believers in the power of collaboration and community. We specialise in helping to build or refresh organisational learning strategy, update their L&D Operating Model, enable skills development, and conduct learning evaluation. We also offer workshops to shift learning mindset and practices for both L&D teams and the broader workforce – as well as speaking at public and internal events.

Learn more about us [at our website](#).

