

North Central Region – Administrative Management Boot Camp

PURPOSE: To enhance the administrative skills sets for new and/or newly promoted or those aspiring to be Assistant and Associate Deans/Directors (*See Audience below*) across Cooperative Extension, agricultural research, and those new to integrated Department Head roles.

CHALLENGES/NEEDS: In administrative roles for Cooperative Extension (CES) and research (agInnovation/agricultural research) both leadership and management are critically important. We are fortunate to have outstanding leadership development experiences at the state, regional and national levels that help aspiring leaders strengthen their skills. However, managing effectively, the ability to deliver on your leadership vision, is taught less frequently.

APPROACH: A retreat-symposium setting. The program is logistically supported by the North Central Cooperative Extension Association (NCCEA) and agInnovation North Central. Specific teaching techniques have been designed to match the curriculum (e.g., a mix of on-site classroom style instruction, hands-on participant interaction, interactive and flexible sessions provide topics deemed critical to success in administrative roles). We also garner topics from participants (on-site) to further discuss or solve problems identified during group discussions. This experience also creates a cohort that will remain connected and continue to communicate and problem solve beyond the actual training.

North Central Administrative Management Boot Camp

From this...

Organizational Assets:

- Mission
- Talent
- Financial resources
- Stakeholders
- Partners/collaborators
- Leaders

Administrative Capacity

To this!!!

Organizational Excellence:

- Strong organizational capacity (talent, financial resources, leadership, organizational culture)
- Outstanding accomplishment and accountability
- Genuine stakeholder support
- Personal health and well-being
- Strategic Direction

AUDIENCE: Participants are selected by invitation from the Deans/Directors within NCCEA and agInnovation North Central. The primary audience is newly appointed Deans/Directors, Associate Deans/Directors, Assistant Deans/Directors, Program Leaders/Directors, Department Chairs/Heads and Center Directors. Additional consideration is given to aspiring leaders with great potential for success in statewide and high-level administrative positions.

TEACHING TEAM: The program is led on-site at the time of the event by a team of experienced administrators and other professionals. The sections of the boot camp include (but not limited to these):

- Foundations for Being an Effective Manager
- Personnel Management
- External Partnerships and Relations and Advocacy
- Fiscal Management

PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Gregg Hadley (KSU) regional Chair NCCEA
Derek McLean (UNL) regional Chair agInnovation NC
Quentin Tyler (MUSE)
Troy Runge (UW)

Lisa Kaslon (UNL)
Jeanette Thurston (NCRA)
Robin Shepard (NCCEA)

EXPECTED COSTS: Participant travel and lodging is expected to be covered by their institution. The registration fee covers curriculum and material development, and event/meeting logistics.

TARGET DATES/LOCATIONS: The 2026 NCR Administrative Boot Camp is scheduled for July 28-30. The schedule currently includes approximately 20 hours of on-site instruction (the actual Boot Camp event), offered across three days, beginning at noon on the first day and concluding by 3:00pm (CT) on the third day.

Boot Camp – Outline

Pre-Boot Camp (Webinars in May and June with advance communications)

General Description: Prior to the Boot Camp, participants will be asked to take part in 1-2 pre-event session (conference calls and/or webinars). The pre-work for the Boot Camp will include answering questions about the purpose of the training program and to provide general content that participants may find useful before attending the actual event. Initial readings and self-assessments will be introduced as part of these pre-events.

Pre-Event Goals: These early session(s) are used to welcome participants, explain the goals for the Boot Camp, and help attendees establish their own expectations/goals for their participation.

Key Topical Sections of The On-site Program:

Boot Camp Goals

General Description: This will explain the goal for the overall training session. It is important for participants to have a general road map of what will happen in the following segments of the Boot Camp, why this training is offered in this context and how the topics within the sections fit together.

Section Goal: The Boot Camp starts with a welcome, overview, and encouragement to be active learners/participants. All sections (described below) will engage participants in meaningful and productive dialogue.

Section I: Foundations for Being an Effective Manager

General Description: These topics are foundational to strong managers and effective leaders. The elements of this section of the Boot Camp suggest philosophies and guiding principles for both management and leadership. It is very important that this initial section also establish an atmosphere that engages participants early, and keeps them engaged throughout the Boot Camp.

Section Goal: A self-assessment of one's own management skills and an understanding of what one can do to enhance those skills.

Section II: Personnel Management

General Description: Our primary asset is people. Over 75-85% of our budget is committed to personnel. Our job is to build the capacity of our human resources to ensure that we can deliver on our mission. And, to do so in such a way that our work, our accomplishments, and our impacts are valuable and valued. Some will say that dealing with human beings with all of our strengths and our weaknesses is a 'messy' business. And yes, the personnel side of our work can be challenging. With clear expectations and sound personnel management practices, we can succeed in the 'people' business.

Section Goal: To provide a deeper understanding of key methods to strengthen our ability to manage our diverse and amazing human resources.

Section III: Fiscal Management

General Description: Managing the institution's fiscal resources requires much more than knowing the amount of money in the budget. An effective manager must understand different sources of funding, the associated authorizations, look for flexibilities and strengths in certain types of funds (budget lines), and how different sources can and cannot be blended into an overall fiscal strategy.

Section Goal: To prepare participants to better address challenges of extramural and intramural fund management.

Section IV: Advocacy and External Relationships

General Description: Effective external relations require LGU leaders to be good communicators and to understand how to build trust and respect with stakeholders and partners who we ask to advocate on our behalf. Leaders also need to understand ethical and policy issues associated with advocacy. This session will feature interaction with local leaders (CARET Delegate and others) who we ask to advocate for us in a variety of settings.

Section Goal: To offer best practices for relationships with external groups and partners who play an important role in advocating for Land Grant Universities.

WILD CARDS: Participant Designed - Wild Card(s) – to be built into ALL sections above.

General Description: The Boot Camp is intended to be highly interactive by allowing participants to design their own learning opportunities. Each Section (I-III) will allow for additional topics to be added based on the self-identified needs of participants.

Goal: To enhance the learning experience by allowing participants to lead in setting the agenda, defining the discussion and organizing training that is provided.