

MOOCs for MOOs

I am sure a lot of you would be interested in studying an MBA, but let's be honest they are expensive, take up lots of time, and they require a lot of commitment. The good news is that there are so many free courses online now that an MBA is no longer the only source of high quality business training. Here are a range of courses, all of which you can take for free, that we in L&D would like to recommend to anyone who is already a **manager of others** or aspires to be. Think of them as your very own, free, first year of an MBA.

Effective Team Building

Becoming an effective leader of teams is a skill that one develops and builds upon over an entire career. However, by understanding some of the crucial concepts of team building and leadership you can become a very competent manager. The University of Michigan have put together a collection of courses on effective leadership in which you will learn essential leadership skills, including how to inspire and motivate individuals, manage talent, influence without authority, and lead teams. You will not only learn from Michigan faculty. You will also learn directly from exceptional leaders including Jeff Brodsky, Global Head of HR for Morgan Stanley, and John Beilein, Head Coach of the University of Michigan Men's Basketball Team. They share their research on how to lead people and teams effectively, and work with you to apply these insights to your own teams and leadership. In every course, you will have an opportunity to apply new leadership skills by working through a series of practical leadership assignments. You can take each course uncertificated for **free**, certificated for £62/course or as a package for £389, which includes a capstone project. Find out more [HERE](#).

Conflict Management

Wherever there are people, there will be conflict. As a manager, your ability to manage that conflict and to turn it into a positive force is vital for the company. University of California, Irvine have put together a fantastic collection of courses in which you will learn to strengthen your personal and professional relationships by constructively addressing conflicts between individuals and within organizations. You will build skills specifically aimed at managing intercultural conflicts in today's global society, and you will explore how competing interests and goals, power imbalances, and other factors influence the nature of conflict and management strategies. You can take the courses individually for **free**, or as a certificated specialisation for £129. Find out more [HERE](#).

Decision Quality

Every decision we make has a consequence, so understanding how to make decisions in a rational and logical way is crucial for all managers within the business. University of California, Irvine have made available a free short course on effective problem solving and decision-making in which you will learn Critical thinking – the application of scientific methods and logical reasoning to problems and decisions – it is the foundation of effective problem solving and decision-making. Critical thinking enables us to avoid common obstacles, test our beliefs and assumptions, and correct distortions in our thought processes. Gain confidence in assessing problems accurately, evaluating alternative solutions, and anticipating likely risks. Learn how to use analysis, synthesis, and positive inquiry to address individual and organizational problems and develop the critical thinking skills needed in today's turbulent times. Using case studies and situations encountered by class members, explore successful models and proven methods that are readily transferable on-the-job. You can take the for free, or you can pay £29 for a certificate. Find out more [HERE](#)

Business Acumen

Knowledge of the world of business is an essential part of being a manager at B & S. However, unless you are willing to study an MBA, it can be difficult to know where to start. We Would like to recommend two collections of courses for you to explore in any way that suits you. The first is a collection of course from the

Wharton Business School, The University of Pennsylvania, which cover the foundations of business including financial accounting, marketing, operations management, and finance. Learn the language of business. Find out more [HERE](#)

The Second collection covers business strategy and is from the University of Virginia. The courses cover the dynamics and the global aspects of strategic management. With cases drawn from leading companies like Disney, Microsoft and Zappos, you will learn how to evaluate industry evolution, build and sustain competitive advantage, formulate and assess business strategies, and align efforts to organizational strategy. Find out more [HERE](#)

Flexible Quality Improvements

Continuous improvement is at the heart of B&S culture, so equipping yourself with some serious tools to look at how improvements can be made, will give you some highly prized skills. The University of Illinois has put together an incredible collection of courses to do just that. Improving Business Finances and Operations will teach you the fundamental financial, accounting, and process management tools and techniques you need to analyze, evaluate, and drive operations across business functions at higher levels of efficiency and effectiveness. All courses can be taken for free, or as a specialisation for £357 However, act quickly as some parts of the course are due to be cancelled. Find out more [HERE](#)

For more information about any of the courses mentioned here or for other recommendations about your own personal learning and development. Please, get in touch with either Sheila or Andrew in L&D. If you have completed any of these courses, please let us know so we can keep a record of it.