



mntech™



ACE LEADERSHIP

PROGRAM

Developing the Leaders That Will Drive Minnesota's Technology Community Forward

The ACE Leadership Program develops technology leaders ready to lead with confidence, influence, and impact across Minnesota's tech ecosystem. This six-month, cohort-based experience brings together emerging and mid-level leaders for six immersive, day-long sessions focused on practical leadership growth and real-world application.

Through executive mentorship, applied leadership development, and peer learning, participants strengthen core leadership skills, clarify their leadership identity, and expand their professional networks. ACE equips leaders to drive stronger outcomes within their organizations while contributing meaningfully to Minnesota's broader technology community.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



Executive Mentorship

Each ACE participant is paired with a senior technology leader who serves as an executive mentor throughout the program. Participants meet with their mentor three times over six months, receiving individualized guidance on leadership growth, career navigation, and real-world challenges. These structured touchpoints reinforce learning between sessions and provide executive-level perspective.



Immersive Leadership Development Experience

Each day-long session blends insight with application. Sessions feature presentations from MnTech leaders and expert facilitators, interactive and simulated exercises, guest lectures and fireside chats with executive leaders, and panel discussions. Participants actively practice new skills and connect learning directly to their work.



Capstone: Present Your Path to Success

The ACE capstone brings leadership growth into focus. Through a final presentation, participants articulate key learnings, define next-step leadership goals, and receive feedback from industry executives—building confidence, accountability, and clarity moving forward.

SESSION TOPICS

Each session includes a presentation from and discussion with a senior executive who will share lessons learned in their areas of expertise.

- Branding – Building Your Leadership Brand
- Networking – Activating & Developing Networks
- Culture - Leading Through Change & Conflict
- Engagement – Ecosystem Engagement
- Communication – Communicating for Results
- Capstone

PROGRAM DATES

Fall Cohort

Session 1 | Thursday, September 24

Session 2 | Thursday, October 8

Session 3 | Thursday, November 12

Session 4 | Thursday, December 10

Session 5 | Thursday, January 14

Session 6 | Thursday, February 11

PROGRAM TUITION

2026 Program Tuition: \$4,000

This tuition reflects a comprehensive, six-month leadership development experience that includes six immersive, day-long sessions, executive mentorship, expert facilitation, and a capstone presentation. Tuition also includes invitations to MnTech signature events, providing ACE Leaders with expanded access to Minnesota's technology community and additional opportunities for learning, visibility, and connection.



Program Leadership

The ACE Leadership Program is owned and led by MnTech and grounded in deep relationships across Minnesota's technology ecosystem. Program leadership ensures ACE remains responsive, relevant, and connected to the real leadership challenges facing today's technology leaders.

Joel Crandall, President & CEO, MnTech

Ismail Ali, Program Director, MnTech

Program Facilitators

ACE is delivered in partnership with trusted leadership practitioners who bring experience in leadership development, organizational strategy, and facilitation.

Dr. Linda Schubring, CEO & President, Leadership Vision Consulting

Brian Schubring, Founder, Leadership Vision Consulting

Rachel Nelms, Principal & Founder, formations consulting

Guest Lectures & Speakers

Throughout the program, ACE Leaders engage directly with senior leaders through guest lectures, fireside chats, and panel discussions—gaining insight into leadership, decision-making, and organizational impact across the tech ecosystem.

Panelists: ACE Alumni & Technology Leaders

ACE Leaders also learn from 15–20 panelists throughout the program, including ACE alumni and technology leaders. These conversations offer candid perspectives on leadership journeys, lessons learned, and navigating complex organizational environments—while strengthening connections within the ACE community.

WHO MAKES ACE WHAT IT IS

PROGRAM LEADERS



Joel Crandall
President and CEO,
MnTech



Ismail Ali
Program Director,
MnTech



Rosie Nestingen
VP of Talent,
MnTech



Piper Cleaveland
Program Director,
MnTech

CO-FACILITATORS



Alison Gretz
Executive Coach
& Facilitator, Design by
Design



Tara Scott
Founder, Tara Scott
Consulting



Rachel Nelms
Principal and Founder,
formations consulting

PREVIOUS GUEST LECTURERS



Jamie Thingelstad,
Chief Technology
Officer, SPS Commerce



Jake Krings
Vice President, Global
Supply Chain and
Logistics, Target



Zach Highes
Vice President, IT
Infrastructure and
Operations, CHS Inc.



Matt Kucharski
President, Padilla



Rama Kulasekaran
Head of Digital Products
Engineering, Optum

LEARN MORE OR SIGN UP FOR THE NEXT COHORT

Joel Crandall
President & CEO MnTech
Joel@mntech.org
952-230-4555

MnTech.org/talent/ace-leadership