# Leading Complex Projects

Advanced Project Leadership Programme

## Course Strapline

Lead high-uncertainty, multi-stakeholder projects through ambiguity, interdependence and change.

## Course at a Glance

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| **Course Duration** | Five days / 25 instructional hours | **Delivery Modes** | Classroom \| Live Virtual \| Blended \| In-company |
| **Level** | Advanced | **Digital Materials** | Complex-project scenarios, mapping tools, simulations and applied leadership outputs |
| **Certificate** | INDENTRA course-completion record, where applicable | **Professional Recognition** | PMI Talent Triangle® - 25 PDUs |

## PMI Talent Triangle® and Professional Development Units (PDUs)

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| Total PDUs: 25 | Ways of Working: 10 | Power Skills: 8 | Business Acumen: 7 |

## Course Overview

Complex projects challenge leaders because outcomes emerge from interacting technical, organisational, commercial, political and human factors. The difficulty is rarely solved by adding more detail to the plan. Leading Complex Projects develops the judgement required to frame complexity, establish effective governance, manage interfaces, align powerful stakeholders and adapt decisions as evidence changes. Participants work through demanding scenarios in which uncertainty, competing interests, fragmented accountability and time pressure must be handled without losing strategic purpose, delivery discipline or trust. The course treats the project as a connected system and develops a practical leadership approach to complexity, governance, interdependence, stakeholder alignment, adaptation and recovery.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Distinguish project complexity from scale, technical difficulty and ordinary delivery uncertainty, and diagnose structural, dynamic, socio-political and emergent complexity.
- Translate strategic intent into clear project purpose, boundaries, success conditions and decision criteria appropriate to a complex environment.
- Design governance, decision rights, assurance and escalation arrangements that remain effective under uncertainty, interdependence and pressure.
- Map critical interfaces, dependencies, assumptions and system-level failure pathways, and use adaptive planning and scenario thinking to maintain control.
- Align powerful stakeholders, lead multidisciplinary teams through ambiguity and disruption, recognise early warning signals and organise disciplined project recovery.

## Benefits

### Benefits to the Individual

- Strengthen judgement for ambiguous, high-uncertainty and politically complex project environments.
- Improve systems thinking, governance design, interface management and adaptive decision-making.
- Build confidence in stakeholder alignment, recovery leadership and practical use of diagnostic and governance tools.

### Benefits to the Organisation

- Improve leadership quality in high-consequence projects where conventional control alone is insufficient.
- Strengthen governance, decision rights, accountability, assurance, interfaces and escalation across complex initiatives.
- Reduce avoidable failure and build organisational resilience, recovery discipline and stronger alignment with strategic value.

## Who Should Attend?

Designed for experienced project and programme managers, project directors and delivery leaders, PMO heads and portfolio professionals, project sponsors, steering-committee members and governance leaders, and engineering, construction, technology and transformation leaders. It is also relevant to commercial, risk and assurance professionals who support difficult, high-consequence project environments.

## Prerequisites and Equipment

Participants should have meaningful experience of project or programme environments. A formal project-management qualification is helpful but not mandatory. Participants should be prepared to analyse ambiguous scenarios, challenge assumptions and defend decisions. Corporate cohorts may use an anonymised organisational project as the principal application case. Any delivery-specific technical requirements are confirmed before the course.

## Learning Approach

The course operates as a scenario-based project-leadership laboratory. Participants work through one evolving complex-project situation requiring diagnosis, systems thinking, governance design, stakeholder leadership, adaptive decision-making and recovery. Facilitated workshops, mapping exercises, executive decision scenarios and leadership simulations develop judgement rather than rote technique. Each participant progressively converts the learning into a focused leadership agenda for a current or future complex project.

## Digital Learning Materials

Digital participant resources support classroom, virtual and blended learning and may include:

- Digital workbook and reference material covering complexity diagnosis, governance, systems integration, stakeholder leadership, adaptive control and recovery.
- Templates for project-complexity profiling, governance and decision-rights mapping, interface and interdependency analysis, stakeholder strategy, escalation and recovery planning.
- Complex-project scenarios, leadership simulations and worked examples used for diagnosis, decision architecture, stakeholder alignment and recovery practice.
- Knowledge checks and concise job aids reinforcing complexity signals, governance choices, interface control, adaptive leadership, escalation and resilience.
- Reusable leadership outputs and a personal complex-project leadership agenda for workplace application.

## Assessment, Certification and Professional Recognition

Course completion is demonstrated through active participation in scenario analyses, governance workshops and leadership simulations; completion of the project-complexity profile and interdependency analysis; contribution to the final complex-project recovery and decision exercise; and preparation of a practical leadership agenda for workplace application. An INDENTRA course-completion record may be provided where applicable. For eligible PMI credential holders, the 25 Education PDUs are classified as 10 Ways of Working, 8 Power Skills and 7 Business Acumen.

## Course Outline

The course comprises five integrated modules and 25 instructional hours, typically delivered over five days. It combines systems thinking, governance, stakeholder leadership and adaptive delivery through one evolving complex-project scenario. The sequence may be adapted to another approved format while preserving the stated learning outcomes and instructional hours.

### Module 1 - Understanding and Diagnosing Project Complexity

*Distinguish genuine complexity from ordinary difficulty and create a practical profile of the conditions shaping the project.*

- Complexity, complication, uncertainty and scale.
- Structural, dynamic, socio-political and emergent complexity.
- Complexity drivers, patterns and early warning signals.
- Strategic purpose, boundary choices, success conditions and the practical project-complexity profile.

#### Applied Activity - Complexity Assessment

*Participants diagnose an evolving project scenario, identify the real sources and interactions of complexity, test boundary choices and build a concise project-complexity profile to guide subsequent leadership decisions.*

### Module 2 - Governance, Authority and Decision Architecture

*Design governance and authority arrangements that support timely, accountable and evidence-based decisions under uncertainty.*

- Governance for high-uncertainty environments.
- Decision rights, accountability and escalation thresholds.

- Sponsor, board, project director and assurance roles.
- Decision quality, evidence, challenge and the governance and decision map.

**Applied Activity - Decision Architecture Workshop**

*Teams define authority, challenge, escalation and evidence requirements for the complex-project scenario, then test whether the resulting decision architecture is clear enough to operate under pressure.*

## Module 3 - Systems Integration, Interfaces and Interdependence

*Treat the project as a connected socio-technical system and control the interfaces through which risk and failure can propagate.*

- The project as a connected socio-technical system.
- Critical interfaces, dependencies and integration risks.
- Assumption management and cascading consequences.
- Commercial and organisational boundaries, interdependency mapping and interface-control arrangements.

**Applied Activity - Systems and Interface Analysis**

*Participants visualise critical dependencies, assumptions, interfaces, decision points and failure pathways, then define practical controls for the most consequential interdependencies.*

## Module 4 - Adaptive Leadership and Stakeholder Alignment

*Lead through ambiguity and competing priorities while building coalitions, managing conflict and adapting plans as evidence changes.*

- Leading through ambiguity and competing priorities.
- Power, interests, coalitions and resistance.
- Conflict, negotiation and trust under pressure.
- Adaptive planning, scenarios, decision gates and the stakeholder and leadership strategy.

**Applied Activity - Stakeholder Leadership Simulation**

*Participants navigate competing interests, conflict and shifting priorities in a structured leadership simulation, using influence, negotiation, evidence and adaptive decision-making to protect project purpose and trust.*

## Module 5 - Resilience, Recovery and Sustained Value

*Recognise deterioration early, organise disciplined recovery and protect outcomes, benefits, confidence and organisational learning.*

- Detecting drift, weak signals and loss of control.
- Organising project recovery without creating further disruption.
- Resetting scope, governance, commitments and confidence.
- Protecting outcomes, benefits and organisational learning through a complex-project leadership simulation and action planning.

**Applied Activity - Project Recovery Laboratory**

*Teams respond to deteriorating performance, fragmented accountability and changing strategic conditions, make defensible reset and recovery decisions, and translate the experience into a focused leadership agenda.*

## Tools, Frameworks and Practical Outputs

Participants progressively build and use a practical complex-project leadership toolkit through the evolving scenario:

- Project-complexity profile and strategic framing and boundary view.
- Governance and decision-rights map, assurance and escalation framework, and interdependency and interface map.
- Stakeholder coalition and engagement strategy, adaptive control and decision-gate approach, and project-recovery decision pack.
- Complex-project leadership simulation outputs and a personal complex-project leadership agenda.

## Delivery Modes Available

Live Classroom | Live Virtual Classroom | Blended Learning | Corporate / In-company. Classroom and virtual delivery use facilitated scenario analysis, collaborative mapping, negotiation, decision workshops and leadership feedback. Blended delivery combines preparation, live workshops, applied assignments and follow-up reflection around the complex-project case. Corporate programmes may be tailored to the organisation's governance, project environment, leadership challenges and anonymised cases while preserving the stated learning outcomes.

## Course Enquiries

**Visit www.indentra.co.uk/leading-complex-projects for the latest course information, delivery availability and enquiry options.**