Course Title: Ethical Leadership: Setting the Tone from the Top

- **Duration:** 5 Days (approximately 35-40 instructional hours)
- **Course Goal:** To provide senior leaders and executives with a deep understanding of their profound impact on organizational ethics and to equip them with the self-awareness, frameworks, and behavioral tools to consciously shape a culture of high integrity, build enduring trust, and lead with unwavering ethical courage in the face of complex business pressures.
- **Core Focus:** Mastering the art and science of leading by example, making values-based decisions, and architecting an organizational culture where integrity is the ultimate competitive advantage.

Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- **Define** their personal leadership values and philosophy and understand how they manifest in their daily actions.
- **Articulate** a compelling and authentic vision for an ethical organization.
- **Recognize** and mitigate their own ethical blind spots and the cognitive biases that affect senior leaders.
- **Apply** advanced ethical decision-making frameworks to high-stakes, "gray area" business dilemmas.
- **Master** the leadership behaviors that create a "speak-up culture" and psychological safety.
- **Align** organizational systems (e.g., performance management, incentives, promotions) with ethical values to drive desired behaviors.
- **Communicate** with transparency and authenticity, especially during times of crisis or ethical challenge.
- **Hold** themselves and their leadership teams accountable for ethical conduct.
- **Navigate** the pressures from shareholders, boards, and the market while upholding ethical principles.
- **Develop** a personal action plan to strengthen their ethical leadership and legacy.

Target Audience:

- C-Level Executives (CEOs, CFOs, COOs, etc.).
- Vice Presidents, General Managers, and Business Unit Leaders.
- Board Members.
- High-potential senior leaders being groomed for executive roles.
- Founders and leaders of high-growth companies.

Prerequisites:

- Significant experience in a senior leadership role.
- A profound commitment to self-reflection and personal growth.

Teaching Methodology:

This is a highly interactive, confidential, and peer-driven masterclass. The methodology includes:

- **Expert-Led Socratic Dialogue:** Facilitated discussions, not lectures, based on seminal texts, frameworks, and real-world events.
- **Intensive Case Study Deconstruction:** Deeply analyzing complex, real-world ethical leadership failures (e.g., Enron, Volkswagen, Theranos) and successes.
- **High-Stakes Ethical Simulations:** Participants will be placed in the role of a CEO or board member facing a rapidly developing ethical crisis and must make and defend their decisions.

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- **Peer Consulting "Hot Seats":** A core component where participants share real (anonymized) ethical challenges from their own careers and receive structured feedback and advice from the cohort.
- **Guided Self-Reflection & Journaling:** Dedicated time for deep personal reflection on values, purpose, and leadership legacy.
- **Guest Speakers (if feasible):** A sitting or retired CEO or board member known for their ethical leadership.

*(For **Online Delivery**, this requires a very high-trust, "cameras-on" environment. Breakout rooms will be used for confidential peer consulting. Anonymous polls and a secure chat channel will facilitate candid responses. The overall group size should be kept small.)*

Materials Provided:

- A high-quality, bound **"Ethical Leader's Journal & Playbook"** with frameworks, reflection prompts, and case studies.
- Pre-reading materials, including key articles (e.g., from HBR, ethics journals) and case studies.
- Results from a 360-degree leadership assessment with a focus on ethical leadership attributes (if arranged beforehand).
- A personal leadership legacy and action plan template.
- Certificate of Completion.

Detailed Day-by-Day Curriculum

Day 1: The Leader's Inner Compass – Values & Purpose

- **Module 1: The Burden & Privilege of Leadership: Setting the Tone (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
  - Welcome, introductions, and co-creation of a "Chatham House Rule" environment for confidential discussion.
  - The concept of "Tone at the Top": Why a leader's every word and action is magnified.
  - The "Shadow of the Leader": How your personal behaviors define the organization's unwritten rules.
  - The link between ethical leadership, employee engagement, and long-term shareholder value.
- **Module 2: What Do You Stand For? Defining Your Leadership Values (Approx. 3 hours)**
  - **Intensive Workshop:** A deeply reflective, guided exercise for participants to identify, prioritize, and articulate their core leadership values.
  - The difference between espoused values and enacted values.
  - "Values in Conflict": Exploring what happens when your core values are in tension with each other or with organizational pressures.
- **Module 3: From Values to Purpose: Crafting Your Leadership Philosophy (Approx. 2 hours)**
  - Moving beyond values to a coherent leadership philosophy or purpose statement.
  - Answering the question: "As a leader, what is my ultimate purpose and what legacy do I want to leave?"
  - **Activity:** Participants draft a personal leadership philosophy statement.
  - **End of Day 1 Recap & Deep Reflection.**

Day 2: The Psychology of Executive Decisions & Blind Spots

- **Module 4: Behavioral Ethics for the C-Suite (Approx. 3 hours)**
  - Why smart, successful leaders make unethical choices.
  - A deep dive into the cognitive biases most dangerous for senior leaders:

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        - **Overconfidence & Hubris.**
        - **Self-Serving Bias & Motivated Blindness.**
        - **The Slippery Slope & Ethical Numbing.**
        - **Groupthink & Loyalty Pressure in Leadership Teams.**
- **Module 5: Deconstructing Executive Ethical Failures (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - **Case Study Deep Dive:** A detailed analysis of a major corporate scandal.
    - Participants will use the behavioral ethics lens to diagnose the individual, group, and organizational pressures that led to the failure.
    - The focus is not on blaming "bad apples," but on understanding the systemic factors.
- **Module 6: Identifying Your Own Ethical Blind Spots (Approx. 2 hours)**
    - **Peer Consulting "Hot Seat" (Round 1):** In a confidential group setting, participants share a past ethical dilemma they faced.
    - The group acts as a "personal board of directors" to help the individual reflect on the pressures and biases that were at play.
    - **End of Day 2 Recap & Q&A.**

Day 3: Architecting a Culture of Integrity

- **Module 7: The Leader as a Cultural Architect (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - Defining culture as "what happens when the leader leaves the room."
    - The formal and informal systems that shape culture.
    - The leader's role in aligning these systems to support integrity.
- **Module 8: Fostering a "Speak-Up" Culture & Psychological Safety (Approx. 3.5 hours)**
    - The critical link between psychological safety and ethical behavior.
    - The leader's specific behaviors that create or destroy safety (e.g., how you respond to bad news, how you treat failure).
    - **Workshop:** "Kill the Messenger" – Analyzing scenarios where leaders inadvertently punished transparency and how they could have responded differently.
    - Techniques for actively soliciting dissent and challenging ideas within the leadership team.
- **Module 9: Aligning Systems: Incentives, Performance & Promotions (Approx. 1.5 hours)**
    - "You get what you reward."
    - Auditing your performance management and incentive systems: Do they inadvertently reward unethical behavior?
    - The importance of making integrity a key criterion for promotion.
    - **Debate:** "Should ethical behavior be a formal component of the annual bonus?"
    - **End of Day 3 Recap & Q&A.**

Day 4: Leading in the Gray – High-Stakes Dilemmas

- **Module 10: Advanced Ethical Decision-Making Frameworks (Approx. 3 hours)**
    - Moving beyond basic frameworks to navigate complex "right vs. right" dilemmas.
    - The "Four Dilemma Paradigms": Truth vs. Loyalty, Individual vs. Community, Short-Term vs. Long-Term, Justice vs. Mercy.
    - Applying a stakeholder analysis to ethical decisions.

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- **Module 11: High-Stakes Ethical Simulation (Approx. 4 hours)**
    - **Intensive Simulation:** Participants are placed in the role of the executive team of the case study company facing a rapidly developing crisis with significant ethical dimensions (e.g., a product safety issue, a data breach, a supply chain scandal).
    - They must work together under time pressure to:
        1. Analyze the situation and its ethical implications.
        2. Make a series of critical decisions.
        3. Develop a communication strategy for the board, employees, and the public.
    - A detailed, facilitated debrief will follow, analyzing the team's decision-making process and ethical reasoning.
    - **End of Day 4 Recap & Q&A.**

Day 5: The Leader's Legacy & Personal Commitment

- **Module 12: Leading with Courage & Conviction (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - The concept of moral courage: The willingness to act on your values, even at a personal cost.
    - Strategies for speaking truth to power (e.g., to the board, to powerful stakeholders).
    - Building personal resilience to withstand the pressures of ethical leadership.
- **Module 13: The Leader's Role in a Crisis (Approx. 2 hours)**
    - Communicating with authenticity, transparency, and empathy during an ethical failure.
    - The art of the sincere public apology.
    - Taking accountability and leading the organization's recovery and learning.
- **Module 14: Defining Your Ethical Leadership Legacy (Capstone) (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - **Action Planning Workshop:** A final, deep reflection.
    - Participants synthesize their learnings to create a personal **Ethical Leadership Action Plan**.
    - The plan will articulate:
        1. Their refined Leadership Philosophy.
        2. Specific behaviors they will start/stop to better model integrity.
        3. A plan to address one systemic issue that may be hindering an ethical culture in their area of influence.
- **Module 15: Course Review & A Commitment to Principled Leadership (Approx. 1 hour)**
    - Review of the key responsibilities of an ethical leader.
    - Participants share one key, actionable commitment from their action plan with the group.
    - Final Q&A, course evaluation, and closing.

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