MERCURY

Strategic Leadership Excellence in Internal Auditing: Driving Integrity, Influence, & Innovation

1 – 12 March 2027
Vienna (Austria)



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Ref: 16474_1022315 **Date:** 1 – 12 March 2027 **Location:** Vienna (Austria) **Fees:** 10600 Euro

Introduction:

Effective leadership within internal auditing is not just about managing teams—it's about driving integrity, foresight, and influence across the organization. This advanced training program elevates audit professionals' leadership capabilities, enabling them to operate with authority, inspire high performance, and deliver strategic value that aligns with organizational goals. Participants will gain the insight and skills necessary to lead complex audit functions, foster collaboration, and influence decision-making at the executive level.

This program aims to develop transformational audit leaders who can bridge the gap between operational execution and strategic influence. Participants will master the skills to lead high-performing teams, manage stakeholders effectively, and ensure that the internal audit serves as a trusted advisor to senior management and the board.

Targeted Groups:

- Chief Audit Executives CAEs.
- Senior Internal Auditors and Audit Managers.
- Audit Team Leaders and Supervisors.
- Compliance and Risk Management Professionals.
- Professionals transitioning into audit leadership roles.
- Experienced auditors seeking to enhance strategic and leadership competencies.

Training Course Objectives:

By the end of this program, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate strong leadership behaviors aligned with ethical and organizational standards.
- Build and sustain effective, high-performing audit teams.
- Apply advanced communication and influence strategies to manage stakeholders.
- Integrate risk-based thinking into leadership decision-making.
- Lead audit functions that drive continuous improvement and strategic value.
- Manage organizational politics and build trust across all levels.
- Design and implement an audit vision aligned with corporate strategy.

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Targeted Competencies:

- Strategic Thinking and Decision-Making.
- Leadership and People Management.
- Emotional Intelligence and Communication.
- Stakeholder Engagement and Influence.
- Risk Awareness and Ethical Governance.
- Change Leadership and Innovation.
- Team Development and Motivation.

Course Content:

Unit 1: Strategic Role of Leadership in Internal Auditing:

- Understanding the evolving mandate of internal audit leadership.
- Shifting from a compliance focus to a strategic business partner.
- Aligning the internal audit vision with organizational goals.
- Balancing assurance, advisory, and consulting roles.
- The leadership mindset: from reactive to proactive influence.

Unit 2: Building and Leading High-Performance Audit Teams:

- Characteristics of top-performing audit teams.
- Strategies for talent acquisition, development, and retention.
- Empowering teams through autonomy and accountability.
- Establishing shared purpose and values.
- Performance management and recognition frameworks.

Unit 3: Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Dynamics:

- Self-awareness and self-regulation in audit leadership.
- Social awareness: reading organizational culture and politics.
- Relationship management and empathy-driven communication.
- Managing difficult personalities and conflicts.
- Emotional agility under pressure.

Unit 4: Communication, Influence, and Stakeholder Engagement:

- Building credibility and trust with executive management and the board.
- Delivering complex audit insights with clarity and impact.
- The art of strategic questioning and active listening.
- Influence without authority: negotiation and persuasion skills.
- Managing resistance and gaining buy-in for audit recommendations.

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Unit 5: Governance, Ethics, and Professional Integrity:

- Upholding the ethical standards of internal auditing.
- Managing ethical dilemmas and conflicts of interest.
- Promoting transparency and integrity across audit processes.
- The role of audit leadership in fostering ethical culture.
- Corporate governance principles for audit executives.

Unit 6: Risk-Based Leadership and Decision-Making:

- Integrating risk intelligence into leadership strategy.
- Assessing risk appetite and tolerance across business functions.
- Using risk indicators to guide decision-making and resource allocation.
- Scenario planning and risk forecasting.
- Linking audit findings to strategic risk management.

Unit 7: Innovation and Change Management in Internal Audit:

- Driving transformation through innovative audit practices.
- Embracing technology: data analytics, AI, and continuous auditing.
- Leading teams through organizational change and digital transformation.
- Overcoming resistance to innovation within audit teams.
- Measuring and communicating the impact of audit innovation.

Unit 8: Performance Excellence and Continuous Improvement:

- Setting performance metrics for audit effectiveness and efficiency.
- Implementing feedback mechanisms and lessons learned.
- Quality assurance and improvement programs QAIP.
- Benchmarking internal audit performance against best practices.
- Sustaining continuous improvement as a leadership discipline.

Unit 9: Strategic Collaboration Across the Organization:

- Partnering with risk, compliance, and governance functions.
- Building cross-functional alliances for enterprise value.
- Communicating audit insights in a business-oriented language.
- Supporting management's strategic initiatives through advisory input.
- Leadership visibility and credibility at the executive level.

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Unit 10: Visionary Leadership and the Future of Internal Auditing:

- Anticipating future challenges and opportunities in audit leadership.
- The next-generation auditor: agility, foresight, and adaptability.
- Leading in an era of disruption and uncertainty.
- Developing leadership succession plans within the internal audit.
- Building a legacy of trust, integrity, and innovation.