BLACKBIRD FOR TRAINING

Comprehensive Course in Effective Internal Audit Leadership

8 – 19 February 2027
Lisbon (Portugal)

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Introduction

In today's rapidly changing environment, internal audit leaders are expected to go far beyond assurance and compliance. They must provide insight, anticipate risk, and guide their organizations through uncertainty. Achieving this transformation requires more than technical expertise—it demands visionary, ethical, and adaptive leadership.

This advanced 2-week course is designed to equip current and future internal audit leaders with the skills and mindset to lead strategically, manage diverse teams, influence stakeholders, and drive innovation—while safeguarding independence and objectivity.

Through practical case studies, leadership simulations, and interactive discussions, participants will develop the core capabilities needed to thrive as modern audit leaders.

Course Objectives

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

- Understand and apply key leadership competencies specific to internal audit.
- Align internal audit activities with organizational goals and risk strategy.
- Build, lead, and inspire high-performing audit teams.
- Communicate effectively with senior executives and audit committees.
- Promote innovation, agility, and continuous improvement within the audit function.
- Navigate complex ethical challenges while maintaining independence and integrity.
- Lead the transformation of internal audit into a value-adding advisory function.

Course Outlines

Day 1: The Role of the Modern Internal Audit Leader

- Evolving from assurance provider to trusted advisor.
- Leadership competencies for audit professionals.
- Global expectations and key leadership models.

Day 2: Strategic Thinking and Audit Planning

- Designing a dynamic, risk-based audit plan.
- Linking audit strategy to enterprise goals.
- Understanding risk governance from a leadership lens.

Day 3: Leading High-Performing Audit Teams

- Attracting, developing, and retaining audit talent.
- Building a culture of coaching and mentoring.
- Enhancing team resilience and collaboration.

Day 4: Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

- Communicating with executives and governance bodies.
- Handling sensitive discussions and managing expectations.
- Presenting compelling audit findings and messages.

Day 5: Leading in a Digital Era

- Integrating technology into audit leadership e.g., analytics, automation.
- Overseeing audits of digital risks and cyber resilience.
- Leading teams through digital change and disruption.

Day 6: Governance, Ethics, and Integrity

- Navigating real-world ethical dilemmas.
- Upholding independence, objectivity, and professional values.
- Setting the ethical tone at the top.

Day 7: Driving Innovation and Continuous Improvement

- Embedding innovation in audit culture.
- Adopting agile auditing practices.
- Measuring and improving audit performance.

Day 8: Crisis Leadership and Response

- Leading during crisis situations e.g., fraud, cyber incidents, emergencies
- Scenario-based risk planning.
- Building audit function resilience.

Day 9: Transforming Internal Audit

- Evolving into a value-driven advisory function.
- Using maturity models to assess and strengthen audit impact.
- Delivering measurable value to stakeholders.

Day 10: Leadership Simulation and Final Workshop

- Group leadership challenge and simulation.
- Team presentations and real-time feedback.
- Personal leadership plans and development strategies.

Why Attend This Course? Wins & Losses!

- Develop advanced leadership skills tailored to internal audit functions.
- Learn to lead strategically, communicate with impact, and inspire trust.
- Prepare for executive-level roles such as Chief Audit Executive CAE.
- Understand emerging risks, technologies, and governance trends.
- Strengthen your ability to lead transformation and add long-term value.
- Engage in hands-on leadership simulations that mirror real-world pressure.

Conclusion

Leadership in internal audit is no longer confined to oversight. Today’s audit leaders must anticipate challenges, guide transformation, and build trust across the organization.

This course provides the tools, insights, and practical experience needed to lead with purpose, agility, and integrity. Whether you're heading a small audit unit or preparing for a senior role, this program will sharpen your leadership capabilities and position you to drive lasting impact.