Making the transition to general management requires a new way of looking at the world. While functional specialists are rewarded for deepening their focus on a single activity, general managers must see—and act on—the big picture. Instead of specializing, they must become adept at understanding, aligning, and integrating a range of functional areas.

THE CURRICULUM

Today’s evolving economy calls for multifaceted leaders who can apply a holistic view of business, identify emerging opportunities, and adapt their strategies to navigate periods of growth and turbulence. Through a unique and tightly integrated five-phase learning cycle, the General Management Program (GMP) at Harvard Business School (HBS) provides an action-oriented and collaborative learning environment to help you become an outstanding business leader. Emphasizing practical knowledge and personalized learning, the program presents an intensive, cross-functional perspective on leadership.

GMP is composed of two on-campus and three off-campus modules that are presented over four months, with seven weeks of study on the HBS campus.

- Module 1: Building Foundational Skills (off-campus)
- Module 2: Sharpening Diagnostic Skills (on-campus)
- Module 3: Applying the Knowledge (off-campus)
- Module 4: Action-Oriented Leadership (on-campus)
- Module 5: Implementation and Ongoing Learning (off-campus)

This case-based curriculum, accompanied by a carefully sequenced series of activities, is structured to help you think and act as a general manager. To a great extent, you will shape your own learning experience. By working on a specific growth agenda, you will apply personalized diagnostics and analyze both individual and company-specific challenges.

Throughout each module, you will have access to Harvard ManageMentor®—an exclusive one-destination enterprise learning resource that helps you meet critical management and leadership needs in the context of your business. This powerful solution delivers on-demand performance support, enhances formal learning, and scales peer-to-peer feedback—across all areas of your organization.

GMP offers you a process of personal growth. You will sharpen your most critical skill sets, strengthen your leadership capacities, and acquire the tools and techniques you and your company need for long-term success. This rich learning experience offers a direct and positive impact on you and your sponsoring organization—both today and tomorrow.
THE PATH TO LEADERSHIP

Through a series of modules on and off campus, GMP provides a holistic view of leadership. The program integrates practical knowledge and personal awareness while honing your analytical skills, providing new strategic frameworks, and building greater confidence.
MODULE 1
Building foundational skills (off-campus)

GMP begins well before you arrive on campus. Given the intensive and rigorous structure of this program, all participants must have a solid foundation of core competencies and a common understanding of terminology. Upon your acceptance into the program, you will receive a set of materials designed to enhance your skills in financial management, strategy formulation, and accounting. HBS will provide you with additional materials as needed to help you achieve the threshold competency level.

Depending on your background, this skill-building effort typically requires three to six hours of work each week in the four weeks leading up to Module 2. The goal: To ensure you arrive on campus ready to learn.

In addition, you will receive print, audio, and video materials that introduce you to the unique HBS learning environment, from our renowned case method and to the HBS living group experience—both key building blocks of GMP.
MODULE 2  
**Sharpening diagnostic skills (on-campus)**

In this module, you will focus on assessing the key tasks facing a business unit leader: setting strategy, building the organization, understanding economics and key value drivers, and exploiting opportunities. You will look deeper into these responsibilities through case studies that emphasize cross-functional and integrative challenges. These real-world cases are illuminated through small groups and classroom discussion, which brings together wide-ranging perspectives on a single problem.

Through this iterative process, you will acquire critical analytic skills and frameworks in three core areas—human resources management, financial management, and strategy formulation—along with a greater knowledge of accounting, marketing, operations, and negotiations. You will gain insight into selecting, developing, and retaining employees as well as into building effective teams for your organization. Most important, you will learn to recognize and diagnose problems, quickly generate and assess options, and select the strategy that has the greatest chance of success.

With an eye on the global economy, the program also features special sessions and outside speakers that explore the skills needed to navigate unpredictable environments and lead the business through periods of struggle, stabilization, recovery and growth.

**An Expanding Window**  Today’s general managers must view challenges and opportunities with an ever-expanding perspective. As such, each week of Module 2 takes on an increasingly wider focus:

- **Week 1:** Assuming responsibility for a business
- **Week 2:** Assessing the business and managing down
- **Week 3:** Managing the business unit and across the organization
- **Week 4:** Managing up the corporate perspective

---

Duration: 4 weeks

- Examine new ways to set strategy, build the organization, and exploit opportunities
- Gain skills in human resource management, financial management, and strategy formulation
- Enhance your knowledge of accounting, marketing, operations, and negotiations
- Begin working on a personalized strategy statement, case study, and action plan

For complete information, program updates, and an online application, visit: [www.exed.hbs.edu/programs/gmp/](http://www.exed.hbs.edu/programs/gmp/)
MODULE 2
Sharpening diagnostic skills (on-campus)

**Personalized Learning** During Module 2, you will apply analytical tools in the development of a strategy statement and case study. These exercises personalize GMP, setting the stage for subsequent learning in later modules and providing benefits to your organization.

After identifying a critical challenge faced by your business that requires the efforts of a skilled general manager, you will develop a strategy statement focused on setting direction and identifying a sustainable competitive position for your company. While this strategy statement defines the target, your case study and related action plan helps you determine how to get there. Drawing on GMP’s diagnostic tools and lessons, you will analyze a particular leadership challenge associated with implementing the chosen strategy. The case study evolves as your learning evolves throughout the program, while the case study and action plan process helps you make the critical transition from problem diagnosis to action.

These exercises will require you to step back, think through your organization’s situation and direction, articulate the strategy behind the direction, and communicate your vision. Often eye-opening, this experience provides one of many opportunities to address problems and issues that are important to you and relevant to your organization.

As part of the peer-to-peer learning model, Module 2 includes two Dinner Roundtables, which provides you with the opportunity to share ideas with participants who face similar leadership challenges or bring relevant experience.

**Living Groups** In Module 2 and throughout the rest of the program, you will do much of your learning in collaboration with a carefully selected eight-person living group representing a diversity of countries, industries, and experience. Serving as noncompetitive mentors, advisors, and coaches, the members of the living group share new perspectives and provide candid, invaluable feedback and support to each other during the transition to general manager. This interaction enhances the learning experience—and builds the foundation for invaluable career-long relationships.
MODULE 3  
Applying the Knowledge (off-campus)

Back in the workplace, you will test your ability to evaluate the business environment on an enterprise-wide basis—looking for opportunities and challenges alike. During this period of analysis and experimentation—an interlude focusing on knowledge in action—you begin to contribute to your organization's success at a higher level.

You will continue to assess key leadership challenges as part of your personalized case study, in which you are the central protagonist. This will compel you to apply your learning in the workplace and to consult with team members and supervisors as you ask and answer key questions: *What do I need to know? What do I need to do? How can I best lead?*

**Using New Resources** During this off-campus module, you will gain access to the proprietary HBS website “Transition to General Management,” which features video clips from HBS alumni who have recently moved into general management positions. These videos highlight the critical issues encountered when making the move from functional responsibility to general management responsibility, and provide the “rules of the road” for managers exploring new roles.

During Module 3, you can also take advantage of the HBS Emotional Intelligence 360 feedback tool and workbook. In addition, you will have access to the vast HBS case library and a wealth of materials from *Harvard Business Review.*

You may call on these resources to extend your learning and to investigate specific topics of personal and professional importance that have not been covered in the course. “Idiosyncratic” learning is a key component of GMP, and these resources in conjunction with your workplace experience will help you identify new learning objectives to pursue when you return to the HBS campus.
MODULE 4
Action-oriented leadership (on-campus)

Through an examination of leadership in action, this module serves as the capstone for GMP. By focusing on driving fundamental change across complex organizations, this module helps you generate results via your action plan, while preparing you to help build your organization, break down organizational resistance to change, and deliver profitable growth.

At the same time, you will continue the process of personal transformation through self-reflection. You will discover new insights about yourself: how you analyze problems, what constitutes your leadership style, and how you can best contribute to the success of your organization.

Focus on Leadership As with the previous on-campus module, each week of Module 4 features a specific theme related to leadership:

- Week 5: Leading through technology innovation
- Week 6: Globalization and strategic integration
- Week 7: Leadership impact

Action-Oriented Discussion Your personalized learning also continues to move forward on several parallel tracks:

- Week 5: You will present your case study to your living group and participate in a facilitated discussion led by a HBS faculty member.
- Week 6: Two additional Dinner Roundtables with a group of carefully selected peers provide you with new insight into key challenges you face.
- Week 7: Through our 360 feedback tool and workgroup, you will explore your personal leadership style. You will also complete your case study, finalizing a practical action plan to your company’s identified challenge—and prepare to return to the workplace ready to implement that plan. A series of reentry exercises will help you apply your GMP learning in the first week, the first month, three months, and one year.
MODULE 5
Implementation and ongoing learning (off-campus) post-program

Through a series of reentry exercises, you will develop an action plan for the first week, the first month, three months, and one year.

In many ways, the final module of GMP is the most important. Upon returning to your workplace, you will implement the action plan that you articulated in your personalized case study. This will provide your company with a comprehensive solution to a fundamental organizational challenge, as well as a concrete return on its investment in GMP.

You will experience the benefit of implementing your plan and seeing things go in unexpected directions—sometimes good, sometimes bad. Revising the action plan in real time and calling on colleagues across the company become invaluable parts of the learning experience.

In addition, your idiosyncratic learning continues as you add new knowledge and competencies that reflect your evolving managerial challenges. HBS’s proprietary websites also enhance your GMP experience and help you to further your specific developmental objectives. If needed, an array of HBS Executive Education programs can address numerous functional needs or other development gaps that might arise.

A Learning Network When you complete GMP, you will become part of the HBS alumni community. In addition to your GMP classmates, the broader HBS network—more than 78,000 HBS alumni in 167 countries—becomes accessible through the proprietary HBS alumni website, which is searchable by name, industry, company, region, and other criteria. A lifelong HBS email forwarding address links each GMP graduate to this powerful global network.

You also may take advantage of Baker Library’s online services, participate in HBS Publishing’s Alumni Plus Program and the Global Leadership Forum, and enjoy a 30-percent discount on open-enrollment HBS Executive Education programs.

With so many dedicated resources, the learning is certain to continue.
CONNECT WITH US
For more information, please contact our client service specialists at:
Executive Education Programs
Harvard Business School
Soldiers Field
Boston, Massachusetts 02163-9986 U.S.
Email: executive_education@hbs.edu
Telephone: 1-800-427-5577
(outside the U.S., dial +1-617-495-6555)
Fax: +1-617-495-6999

Connect with us via LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter: www.exed.hbs.edu/connect/