

SPOTLIGHT:

Empowering Leaders, Strengthening Teams

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- Empowering Boards To Lead With Purpose
- Planning For Progress





Empowering Leaders, Strengthening Teams

Tisha Gierhart, Chief Facilitation Officer of Shafer Leadership Academy

Need an easy way to develop your people?

At Shafer Leadership Academy, we believe that growing your people is the best way to increase your impact. So find a program that's right for you. Now is the time to invest in your people. Let's multiply your success with more effective and enthusiastic leaders.

[Find A Program](#)



Muncie food bank drivers couldn't pause routes for professional development, so Tisha Gierhart, Chief Facilitation Officer for Shafer Leadership Academy, rode with them to talk about communication strategies. At Hill Pet Supply in Richmond, Indiana, Tisha spent hours connecting with employees to ensure its leadership sessions addressed specific challenges and opportunities. The manager at a Fortune 500 company in Portland, Indiana, said, "Tisha is more trusted partner than trainer."

"Her approach is rooted in authenticity, connection, and trust," the manager explained. "You can tell she deeply believes in what she teaches, and her passion is contagious. Her sessions are always hands-on, thought-provoking, and personal. She listens, she engages, and she makes every person in the room feel seen and heard."

Since 2015, SLA has grown to provide custom programming for Indiana companies, including manufacturers such as FCC Indiana, as well as businesses in more than nine states.

Tisha is comfortable among the machinery and assembly lines, having grown up in a "one-caution-light" town, where her stepfather worked second shift while going to school. Starting in college, Tisha worked in factories — making exhaust systems for semitrucks, forming bolts, and wiring harnesses for cars.

"There's no shame in blue collar work," said Tisha. "It taught me how to work hard. I also learned the importance of showing up and having accountability."

Authentic connection and trust

Tisha is driven to help factory leaders build relationships and cultivate environments that increase retention and





Tisha Gierhart meets with Stacie Paxson, Manager of Human Resources at FCC Indiana, during a visit to their manufacturing facility.

“People bring me joy, and I live to provide them with tools to be successful.”

support personal and professional growth. She becomes “part of their team,” and she cares deeply for every individual’s journey.

“My passion is people. People bring me joy, and I live to meet people where they are and to provide them with tools they need to be successful,” Tisha explained. “People will stay if they feel valued and appreciated, and it all begins with the top, down, which is why professional development and refreshers are so important.”

In fall 2020, Tisha provided 144 hours — or 45 hours per employee — of leadership training for supervisors and front-line leads at a food manufacturing facility in Portland, Indiana. It was the largest training effort in the nonprofit’s 14-year history.

Tisha’s success as a facilitator comes from her personal experience as well as credentials, including a degree in business administration and management from Indiana Wesleyan University. She is a certified coach, trainer, and speaker with The John Maxwell Team; and with more than 40 hours of certified coach training, she is also credentialed in The Leadership Challenge and a partner of The Five Behaviors of a Team with Wiley Corporation. She also completed Shafer Leadership’s signature Emergence program and Advanced Facilitator Training.

“I learn something new and meet someone new every day, which is why I love this work,” she explained. “I am passionate about making a difference and committed to building purposeful relationships and motivating others to lead by example. My Christian faith guides me in this pursuit to serve others and my community with authenticity and compassion.”

A Commitment to Indiana’s Workforce

SLA Executive Director Mitch Isaacs said Tisha has grown with the nonprofit, which earned nearly \$33,000 from custom programming in 2015 compared to more than \$394,400 in 2024. Tisha expertly navigated the shift to virtual programming during the COVID-19 pandemic, Mitch said, and she continues to adjust to trends and leverage new technology.

“Her expertise lies in creating dynamic learning environments that empower individuals and teams to unlock their potential,” he added. “She has a unique blend of empathy and strategic insight that makes people want to open up and participate. Whether virtual, in-person or a hybrid, she brings a contagious energy and practical, inspiring insights that stick with people and make lasting change in their personal and professional lives.”

Her commitment to this work and Indiana’s workforce is clear. Stacie Paxson, human resource manager at FCC Indiana, said Tisha’s personal stories and vulnerability help break down barriers and invite others to share and connect.

“Tisha takes us on a journey of personal discovery of ourselves and others. That awareness helps us lead in a way that supports others in our organization,” Stacie said. “Tisha loves people, her energy is infectious and she truly cares about an individual’s success. She has the ability to remember people and their challenges. She gives them the encouragement and hope to continue to pursue leadership, which is truly about helping others.”

Pam Fisher, senior HR manager at Hill’s Pet Nutrition in Richmond, Indiana, said Tisha’s personal stories and drive to connect with people across the organization ensures trainings are holistic and personalized to each organization.

“Tisha’s approach has helped our team focus on not only themselves as leaders, but how we function as a team,” Pam said. “The trainings reinforce the impact a leader has on a person’s sense of belonging and success within an organization.”

“For many years, I was a leader who thought I had to be perfect. I also had to be the perfect mom, wife, co-worker or whatever hat I had on that day,” Tisha said. “But now, it is more important for me to be real and grow and learn right along with each person in my class. I make mistakes, I get upset, I overreact, and I am not perfect. I want to be vulnerable so that people can relate.”

Build confident leaders.

Explore custom leadership development and training

Shafer Leadership Academy offers customized sessions of many of our popular workshops and seminars. These custom programs can be delivered virtually, in-person, or hybrid to accommodate your team’s learning requirements.



Honoring Growth, Leadership, & Community

We gathered at the Innovation Connector Tuesday, June 24th to celebrate another year of impact with Shafer Leadership Academy. Together, we reflected on the growth of our programs, the increasing diversity of our participants and facilitators, and the expansion of our national reach through custom programming.

We honored Mitch Isaacs for 10 years of leadership as Executive Director and recognized Steve Smith with Director Emeritus status for his foundational contributions to SLA's mission.

Thank you to all who attended and continue to support inclusive leadership development.

Planning for Progress with the Yorktown Chamber

The Yorktown Chamber of Commerce recently partnered with Shafer Leadership Academy for a strategic planning session designed to align their vision, energize their leadership, and chart a clear path forward. Facilitated by Executive Director Mitch Isaacs, the session sparked meaningful conversation, encouraged collaborative thinking, and equipped board members with the tools to lead with purpose. From defining goals to clarifying priorities, it was a morning of focus, connection, and momentum.

This session is one of many ways Shafer Leadership Academy supports organizations in East Central Indiana and beyond. If your team could benefit from a tailored planning session that fosters alignment and strategic growth, we'd love to help. Contact us to learn more about how we can guide your next step forward.



Join Our Monthly LIVE Virtual Discussions

Join us on **July 11th**, **August 15th**, and **September 19th** at **10:00 am** for engaging conversations where we will dive into the essence of leadership through genuine storytelling, sharing unique perspectives, and exploring hot topics to inspire and empower leaders on their journey to authenticity and success!

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Streaming LIVE on your favorite social networks.



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LEADING MULTI-GENERATIONAL TEAMS

Empowering Boards To Lead With Purpose

The All Aboard program gathered passionate individuals from across East Central Indiana for an inspiring evening focused on strengthening nonprofit board leadership. Through engaging panels, meaningful discussions, and shared meals, attendees—ranging from first-time board members to experienced leaders—gained practical tools and insights for serving with purpose and impact. Thanks to the support of local partners, panelists, and moderator Dr. John Anderson, the event reinforced how empowered boards can build stronger communities.

Inclusive Leadership Word Search

Belonging Allyship
Equity Culture
Diversity Engagement
Inclusion Bias
Perspective Voice
Empathy Community
Collaboration Growth
Respect

B V Y E M P A T H Y W I R
I G Z X C U L T U R E E E
A I C O M M U N I T Y S S
S R T Y U V O I C E C P P
E S P E C T I V E R I Q E
M N I I N C L U S I O N C
P A E L D A G F D S A T T
A R L B E L O N G I N G I
T E E Q U I T Y M N B V V
H S D I V E R S I T Y Y E
Y A L L Y S H I P R T N G
C O L L A B O R A T I O N
R E S P E C T K L M J H F
G R O W T H Q W E R T Y D
N M A S D F G H J K L Z X

Upcoming Events

Shafer Leadership sessions are led by facilitators who guide participants to learn in community together around a leadership development topic. Facilitation is different than lecturing, webinar, or presentation style format.

July

THU 10 **Strategic Foresight for Leaders**
Encounter and practice various aspects of strategic foresight, preparing to apply the techniques to real-world challenges.

Virtual Early Riser



Chris Mayer

TUE 15 **Practicing Positivity**
Learn how to build a lasting mindset of positivity through practical strategies that improve stress management, strengthen relationships, and boost workplace morale.

In-Person Lunch & Learn



Adam Bouse

WED 23 **Master the Everyday Art of Selling**
Learn to leverage everyday behaviors to become more persuasive, strengthen relationships, and confidently ask for meaningful behavior change.

Virtual Workshop



Matt Dickerson

WED 30 **Authentic Boundaries: Set & Sustain**
Create authentic, empowering boundaries through mindful movement, self-reflection, and tools that help protect your energy and honor your needs.

Coffee Talk



Nichole Linebaugh

August

THU 07 **Lessons From Life's Unexpected Path**
Discover mindset shifts and tools to face uncertainty with resilience, authenticity, and self-compassion.

Virtual Early Riser



Sara McInerney Hauck

THU 14 **Dignity Across Divides**
Learn how to navigate disagreement with dignity and empathy, using practical tools to break harmful cycles and strengthen team collaboration and communication.

In-Person Lunch & Learn



Melinda Messineo, PhD

THU 21 **How To Reclaim Joy In The Everyday**
Break free from burnout and learn how to redefine success with practical tools that help you reclaim your time, energy, and purpose—without sacrificing performance.

In-Person Workshop



Erika Bayh

WED 27 **Giving & Receiving Feedback With An Inclusion Lens**
Practice real-life feedback scenarios using the SBI model while exploring how bias, power, and inclusion impact effective, collaborative communication.

Virtual Workshop



Lillian Forsyth



Register Today for Free!

www.shaferleadership.com/calendar/

September

THU 04 **The Art of Virtual Facilitation**

Explore how to manage energy and attention, use interactive tools with purpose, and show up with presence and confidence in a digital space.

Virtual Early Riser



Eilish Wasserman

TUE 09 **High Road Leadership**

In a divided world, learn how to lead from the high road by valuing others, practicing humility, and strengthening your emotional leadership skills.

In-Person Lunch & Learn

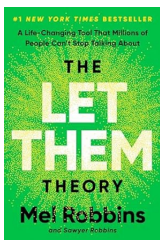


Casey Ash

TUE 16 **Off the Shelf: The Let Them Theory**

This session explores how letting go of control can strengthen trust, improve accountability, and empower teams to take ownership and perform at a higher level.

In-Person Discussion



WED 17 **Holding Yourself And Others Accountable**

Learn practical tools to build trust, improve performance, and foster a culture of accountability by recognizing and shifting unproductive behaviors.

Virtual Workshop



Susan Rozzi



Skill Development Programs Presented by Eastern Indiana Works



Eastern Indiana Works provides these sessions, in partnership with Shafer Leadership Academy, as a free service to our clients.

July

TUE 22 **Mastering Professionalism & Time Management**

This workshop covers key skills for thriving in the workplace, including professionalism, managing workload, and finding balance. Learn how to set goals, advocate for yourself, and bring meaningful value to your team.

TUE 29 **How To Get People To Hear You**

We will discuss how can you effectively share your perspective, be acknowledged, and receive beneficial feedback from others in the workplace. Together we will learn about the power of active listening.

Our Mission

Shafer Leadership Academy provides inclusive leadership development so that people, organizations and communities reach their full potential.

Future Vision

Empowering people to inspire positive change in their community. Our participants excel in their careers, enrich the lives of others and transform their communities.

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