

Leadership Media



Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program

TED LASSO – SEASON 1

Release Date: 2020

Studio: Universal Television

Genre: Comedy, Drama, Sports

Runtime: Approximately 30 minutes per episode. 10 Episodes

Available for Streaming: Apple TV+ (subscription)

Series Synopsis

Ted Lasso is a series about an American collegiate football coach (Ted Lasso) who is hired to coach an English soccer team.

Facilitation

Through each episode of Ted Lasso, valuable leadership lessons, motivation styles, team cohesion ideas and leadership styles can be observed. The series also addresses several current topics within the wildland fire community, such as mental health and team dynamics. The objective is to identify impactful topics for you and your organization and create a shared understanding to facilitate discussions.

This facilitator's guide is designed to view each episode with sample questions to follow for each episode. Episodes 7 and 8 are combined and suggested to be viewed together as they are very closely related, and lessons carry across the two episodes. The story line progresses through each episode, so it is recommended that the episodes be viewed in order.

1. Handout and review the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles sheet. Suggested additional reading [Leading in the Wildland Fire Service](#)
2. Show Ted Lasso – Episode 1 (30 minutes)
3. Have students discuss some of the leadership styles, values and principles they could identify.
4. Utilize the sample questions below to encourage further discussion.
5. Repeat steps for each episode.

Other Facilitation options:

- For each episode identify a character in a leadership position or portraying leadership qualities and identify the leadership values and principles they are employing or not employing and discuss their successes, short-comings, and challenges.
- Identify leadership styles of each character in the episode and compare how those styles could/could not work within your organization.

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Sample questions for Episode 1

- Describe how you make personal connections within your work environment. Please share examples where coach Lasso or others make similar connections.
- Have you ever felt like you were set up for failure? How did you handle this situation?
- What observations can you make about Rebecca's command presence?
- What were your observations of the "office rearrangement" scene? What were some of your key takeaways?
- Share any quotes you took away from this episode. "Smells like potential", do we often look at the positives within our situation?
- What leadership lessons or styles can you take away from this episode and apply in the wildland fire environment?

Sample Questions for Episode 2

- What are ways you can immerse yourself in the culture of your work environment?
- Are there ways to set yourself up for making the right first impressions? Are first impressions everything? How do you recover from a negative first impression?
- What are some things Ted Lasso does to learn who the people are around him? Are there tools you have used such as rapid team building?
- Ted learns Nate's name and it comes as a surprise to Nate, how do you value everyone in the workplace?
- After suffering a setback, how does your workplace move forward?

Sample Questions for Episode 3

- What are the benefits of using subordinate ideas such as Nate's play in the beginning? What are the disadvantages? Who is accountable when the leader makes such a decision?
- How can you do things like Ted to "participate" in team laps in your work environment?
- Ted learns his people well, is there "leadership reading" you can employ in your workplace?
- How does your supervisor handle conflict between employees? Do they get involved?

Sample Questions for Episode 4

- Taking the conflict ideas from the previous episode, when is it time for a leader to step in? Can you think of ways to do so that work vs what wouldn't for your specific workplace?
- Rebecca reluctantly accepts the help of Rupert at the charity auction under the knowledge it will bring in more money for the children's auction. At what point do you as a leader swallow your pride for the greater good vs personal pride? Have you had to put yourself aside for the greater good of the team?
- Roy makes the first move in attempting to "squash the beef". While difficult, why is it so important for the leader to take this first, sometimes uncomfortable first step?
- Rebecca acknowledges Keeley's help late in the episode. Same as previous question, in leadership why is this important?

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Sample Questions for Episode 5

- What are some tools your workplace uses to help compartmentalize things going on outside work? Do you always need to shut down outside “noise”?
- You start to see the formation of a support group in this episode when Ted is talking with Nate, Coach Beard, and Higgins. Is there a way you can form a general support team within your workplace, involving multiple people in a setting to help “hash things out” whether work related or not?
- As a leader, how do you handle ego within your team? While confidence is needed in the workplace, how can a large ego(s) be so detrimental to the team?
- In a subtle move, Isaac, who has picked on Nate for several episodes, moves over to share a seat with Nate during one of Ted’s speech’s. Why is this so important, and what is it showing?

Sample Questions for Episode 6

- Ted gives his most passionate speech yet about practice. Name something that stood out to you about the speech regarding practice. Part of his speech is to get a message across to Jamie, what is he also doing for the team in this moment?
- Rebecca shows up to the ritual to help the team by sacrificing items important to them, explain why this is pivotal for her as a leader, and why it would be so important to the team.
- Jamie also shows up to the ritual. What is so important about him showing up? Can you think of some leadership qualities different from Rebecca that he is showing that are important to building himself back with the team?
- During the ritual, Rebecca says “f*#\$ the haters”. How can this be a healthy mindset in leadership? How can this be a non-productive mindset in leadership?

Sample questions for Episodes 7 & 8

- Through both episodes Ted is struggling with the events in his personal life. While nobody talks directly with Ted about it, many offer support in other ways. Do you have the tools to recognize when someone is struggling with something in their life? What are some ways to encourage someone to seek help if you think they need it?
- Why do you think Ted asks Nate to share with the players what he thought about how they are playing? While it seemed to be effective in the episode, is there a time when something similar would be appropriate in “real life?”
- The “diamond dogs” are established to help Ted work through something that he did. Do you have people to confide in and get advice within your work environment? How can you foster this type of support within your organization? Can too much mixing of personal life with work life cause issues?
- “Be curious not Judgmental.” What are some examples of when you have underestimated someone within your organization? What are some tools you can employ to remove biases or judgements before you get to know someone and/or their skills?

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Sample Questions for Episode 9

- As a leader how do you handle a failure or missed opportunity in your organization? (When you are the responsible party vs a failure/missed opportunity of a subordinate)
- As Ted grapples with the idea of benching Roy there isn't much talk of a successor at first. How are you setting up succession within your work environment?
- What can you do as a leader to make decisions when someone has either "topped out" in your work environment or are no longer being challenged?
- What if we develop people and they leave? What if we don't and they stay?
- Coach Beard is Ted's most trusted advisor. Do you have a trusted "right-hand"? Are you that person for someone? What are some ways to find this person for yourself?

Sample Questions for Episode 10

- Ted evolves and realizes to beat their strongest opponent he needs feedback from everyone on the team and implements trick plays, what does this do for everyone involved?
- Roy is told to pick the next captain on the team, what are the advantages/disadvantages of him vs the coach making this decision? Is this a realistic option where you work?
- Everyone at first tries to not check the score of the other game (which would help determine relegation) and focus on the game they are currently playing. Why is this important?

Season Wrap up Questions and thoughts

- Coach Lasso has several qualities as a leader that have been celebrated. What are some of the downfalls, not of Lasso himself, but with his leadership style?
- Ted is quick to forgive those who "opposed" him (Jamie Tartt, Rebecca Welton). What are some benefits to handling people with that level of forgiveness? What are some potential "watch outs?"
- What leader(s) would you like to emulate? Discuss different scenarios that each leader would have more success.

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Be proficient in your job, both technically & as a leader.

- Take charge when in charge.
- Adhere to professional standard operating procedures.
- Develop a plan to accomplish given objectives.

Make sound & timely decisions.

- Maintain situation awareness in order to anticipate needed actions.
- Develop contingencies & consider consequences.
- Improvise within the commander's intent to handle a rapidly changing environment.

Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised, accomplished.

- Issue clear instructions.
- Observe & assess actions in progress without micro-managing.
- Use positive feedback to modify duties, tasks & assignments when appropriate.

Develop your subordinates for the future.

- Clearly state expectations.
- Delegate tasks that you are not required to do personally.
- Consider individual skill levels & developmental needs when assigning tasks.

Know your subordinates and look out for their well-being.

- Put the safety of your subordinates above all other objectives.
- Take care of your subordinate's needs.
- Resolve conflicts between individuals on the team.

Keep your subordinates informed.

- Provide accurate & timely briefings.
- Give the reason (intent) for assignments & tasks.
- Make yourself available to answer questions at appropriate times.

Build the team.

- Conduct frequent debriefings with the team to identify lessons learned.
- Recognize accomplishments & reward them appropriately.
- Apply disciplinary measures equally.

Employ your subordinates in accordance with their capabilities.

- Observe human behavior as well as fire behavior.
- Provide early warning to subordinates of tasks they will be responsible for.
- Consider team experience, fatigue & physical limitations when accepting assignments.

Know yourself and seek improvement.

- Know the strengths/weaknesses in your character & skill level.
- Ask questions of peers & supervisors.
- Actively listen to feedback from subordinates.

Seek responsibility and accept responsibility for your actions.

- Accept full responsibility for & correct poor team performance.
- Credit subordinates for good performance.
- Keep your superiors informed of your actions.

Set the example.

- Share the hazards & hardships with your subordinates.
- Don't show discouragement when facing setbacks.
- Choose the difficult right over the easy wrong.

DUTY

RESPECT

INTEGRITY