

DESCRIPTION

People, Purpose & Pay with Mercer is a comprehensive training program designed to equip professionals and organizational leaders with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the evolving landscape of compensation and benefits. This series focuses on critical aspects of the total rewards ecosystem, from strategic compensation frameworks to innovative wellness benefits. Participants will engage in interactive discussions, case studies, and practical exercises that foster a deep understanding of how to align rewards with organizational goals and employee needs. By the end of the series, attendees will be empowered to advocate for impactful compensation initiatives, drive employee engagement, and cultivate a thriving workforce through effective communication and change management strategies.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

- Design and implement strategic total rewards programs
- Utilize data-driven insights to advocate for compensation and benefits initiatives
- Communicate effectively during times of change

WHO SHOULD APPLY?:

- People leaders and those looking to grow their organizational influence
- Those in roles that make decisions and/or implement people-centered programs
- Change Management Leaders, Organizational Development Practitioners, Senior Leadership, HR Professionals, Compensation Analysts, Benefits Administrators

**Individuals who have completed the PRO Inclusive Leadership program will be given priority consideration in the selection process*

DATES

September 10 - December 7, 2026

FORMAT

Six (6) 60-minute live virtual webinar sessions + one (1) capstone project

SCHEDULE (all sessions are scheduled at 2:00 PM CT)

- Thursday, September 10
- Thursday, September 24
- Thursday, October 8
- Thursday, October 22
- Thursday, November 5
- Thursday, November 19



Certificate of Completion will be issued to participants that meet attendance requirements, submit required assignments, and complete the capstone project.

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Session 1: Navigating the Total Rewards Ecosystem: Strategies for Success

This session provides a comprehensive overview of the total rewards ecosystem, emphasizing the importance of integrating various components such as compensation, benefits, and recognition. Participants will explore effective strategies to navigate this complex landscape, ensuring alignment with organizational goals and employee needs. Through case studies and interactive discussions, attendees will gain insights into best practices for creating a holistic rewards strategy that drives engagement and retention.

Session 2: The Art and Science of Compensation: A Strategic Perspective

Delve into the dual nature of compensation as both an art and a science in this engaging session. Participants will learn how to balance quantitative analysis with qualitative insights to develop a strategic compensation framework. The session will cover key concepts such as market benchmarking, pay equity, and performance-based pay, equipping attendees with the tools to craft compensation strategies that attract and retain top talent while supporting organizational objectives.

Session 3: Beyond One-Size-Fits-All: Creative Benefit Strategies That Save Costs

One-size-fits-all benefits rarely match today's diverse workforce needs—or budget realities. In this session, we'll explore how employers can rethink plan design and program mix to improve fit and outcomes while uncovering creative cost savings. Discussion will focus on targeted, flexible approaches (e.g., choice-based benefits, smarter vendor/carrier design, integrating with corporate risk management, and "right-sized" wellness investments) that help control spending without diluting the employee experience. The Cohort will leave with practical ideas to tailor benefits more effectively, prioritize what matters most, and reduce unnecessary cost through more inventive, data-informed design.

Session 4: Incentives Through the Lifecycle: From Plan Design to Launch, Listen, and Evolve

Incentive design isn't a one-and-done decision—it's a spectrum of progress, and organizations are often at very different points in the journey. This session creates space to compare where participants are today: building foundational concepts, pressure-testing and making the business case, implementing new designs, or operating ("living in") a recently launched plan and managing what comes next. Through peer discussion and practical examples, participants will explore what it takes to move from one stage to the next—clarifying goals, aligning stakeholders, defining success measures, and anticipating adoption and behavior change. The Cohort will leave with ideas and checkpoints tailored to their current stage, plus lessons learned from others navigating similar transitions.

Session 5: Building a Performance Management Program: Designing the Framework to Support Pay Decisions

In this session, participants will learn how to develop a performance management program that is practical to run, scalable across the organization, and credible enough to inform pay decisions. The Cohort will explore key design elements—performance philosophy, goal-setting standards, rating approach, review cycles, and calibration—and how each decision impacts consistency, differentiation, and administrative effort. The session will also delve into translating performance outcomes into compensation administration (merit increases, bonuses, promotions, and budget allocation), including governance, documentation, and controls that support fairness, and defensible decisions.

Session 6: The Communications Playbook: Change Management with Transparency and Trust

This session emphasizes the critical role of communication in change management, particularly in the context of compensation and benefits initiatives. Participants will learn strategies for fostering transparency and trust during times of change, ensuring that employees feel informed and valued. Through interactive discussions and role-playing scenarios, the Cohort will develop a communications playbook that outlines best practices for engaging stakeholders and managing expectations effectively.

Capstone Activity: Participants will choose one of two “show-and-tell” paths and share with the broader group: **(1)** a Total Rewards program or change they’ve recently implemented, or **(2)** a program or change they’re ideating and preparing to propose. Programs to be shared will connect back to the key themes covered across the full learning series, highlighting practical lessons learned—successes, challenges, critical watchouts, and decision points others should consider if they’re exploring something similar. The goal is to surface real-world examples the group can learn from and apply in their own organizations. Group discussions to be held virtually the week of **November 30th** and **December 7th**.

COURSE FACILITATOR

Mercer, a Marsh business, is a global leader in helping clients realize their investment objectives, shape the future of work and enhance health and retirement outcomes for their people. Mercer is a business of [Marsh](#) (NYSE: MRSB), a global leader in risk, reinsurance and capital, people and investments, and management consulting, advising clients in 130 countries. With annual revenue of \$27 billion and more than 95,000 colleagues, Marsh helps build the confidence to thrive through the power of perspective. For more information about Mercer, visit [mercer.com](#), or follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#).

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

PRO expects and encourages participants to challenge one another's ideas respectfully in conjunction with our commitment to engaging a multitude of perspectives. However, expressing hate or intolerance toward others based on their particular ideas or identities will not be tolerated. Participants are also expected to share constructive feedback throughout the process to improve the experience and outcomes for future meetings and cohorts.

ACCOMMODATIONS STATEMENT

If you have a disability that requires reasonable accommodation to fully participate in a PRO event, email membership@prosportsassembly.org at least three (3) business days in advance for arrangements to be made. Your response helps us make all PRO events more inclusive.