

## Youth Empowerment Seminar and Ethical Leadership & Stress Management Training at Agricultural Development Bank Limited (ADBL)

### Abstract

In October 2024, Agricultural Development Bank Limited (ADBL) partnered with the Art of Living team to deliver two transformative training programs that promoted holistic well-being and leadership. Led by **Neeva M. Pradhan, Director of Corporate Programs**, and **Achut Gautam, a senior faculty member of the Art of Living**, along with senior teachers and experienced facilitators, these programs addressed different facets of leadership for both new employees and senior executives.

The **Youth Empowerment Seminar: Tapping Inner Potential for Leadership Roles** provided 40 newly inducted Lok Sewa graduates with foundational tools to build resilience, self-management, and effective communication skills. Conducted on October 27 at the Bode Training Center, this program aimed to develop the participants' potential as future leaders.

Meanwhile, the **High-Impact Ethical Leadership and Stress Management Training** engaged 25 senior executives from October 28-29 at Rampath ADBL's Training Hall. This program emphasized ethical decision-making, integrity, and stress resilience, equipping senior leaders to navigate complex ethical dilemmas while fostering a culture of trust and accountability within the organization.

Feedback from both programs was overwhelmingly positive, with participants noting improvements in stress management, work-life balance, and ethical awareness. To support continued growth, four follow-up sessions will be conducted over the next two months. These sessions underscore ADBL's commitment to fostering a thriving organizational culture centered on well-being and ethical leadership.

## Introduction

In collaboration with the Art of Living (AOL), ADBL introduced two specialized training programs to build a resilient, value-driven workforce equipped for the challenges of modern business. The training programs emphasized both well-being and ethical foundations, creating a supportive environment for professional growth at all levels.

1. **Youth Empowerment Seminar:** Aimed at recent Lok Sewa graduates, this seminar provided tools for personal development and foundational leadership training, focusing on inner resilience, confidence, and effective communication.
2. **Ethical Leadership & Stress Management Training:** Tailored for senior executives, this program addressed high-stakes ethical decision-making and stress management to build resilience and foster ethical integrity at the highest levels of the organization.

## Our Approach

Our program is specifically designed to address the uncertainties of today's environment, offering targeted support for businesses of all sizes—from small and medium enterprises to large corporations, the backbone of our economy. Delivered over a 3-hourly, 3-day session, it equips participants with empowering tools and techniques to navigate challenging times. In addition to fostering emotional and mental resilience, the program emphasizes improving physical health, boosting immunity, alleviating anxiety, nurturing stronger relationships, and cultivating a positive outlook. For ADBL's senior management, we customized the program into a 5-hour, 2-day session to meet their specific needs.

## About Agricultural Development Bank Limited (ADBL)

The Agricultural Development Bank Limited (ADBL) of Nepal, established in 1968, is a leading financial institution dedicated to enhancing the agricultural sector and rural economy. Initially founded under the ADBN Act of 1967 to provide credit for agricultural productivity, ADBL has expanded its services through mergers to support small farmers, cottage industries, and commercial banking. As a public limited company licensed as an "A-class financial institution" by Nepal Rastra Bank, ADBL is 51% government-owned and 49% publicly owned. With over 1.2 million customers served through 278 offices across 77 districts, ADBL focuses on comprehensive banking services, prioritizing agriculture, industry, trade, and underserved sectors to drive national economic growth. Guided by core values of ethics, accountability, innovation, and customer-centricity, ADBL fosters a resilient organizational culture that significantly contributes to the vision of "Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali."

## About Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership forms the cornerstone of any successful and sustainable organization. It involves leading by example, making principled decisions, and fostering a workplace culture grounded in trust, respect, and transparency.

In the Ethical Leadership training, senior executives at ADBL explored these aspects in depth. Through real-life scenarios, participants learned to navigate ethical dilemmas with integrity, balancing organizational goals with ethical considerations. The training emphasized accountability, open communication, and transparency in leadership roles. By developing these skills, the program aimed to strengthen ADBL's organizational culture, driving sustainable growth and reinforcing a positive reputation within the industry.

## Objectives

Both training programs were designed with clear objectives to benefit individuals and the institution as a whole:

- **Enhancing productivity and resilience** through mindfulness, self-management, and ethical awareness.
- **Promoting a work-life balance** to support mental well-being and job satisfaction.
- **Cultivating ethical decision-making and accountability** as fundamental values across all levels.
- **Fostering stronger team connections** and a collaborative organizational culture.
- **Building intrinsic motivation, enthusiasm, and a sense of purpose** within the workplace.

## Program Structure and Leadership

Each program was meticulously designed to address the unique needs of its target audience:

### Youth Empowerment Seminar: Tapping Inner Potential for Leadership Roles

This one-day seminar targeted 40 recently graduated Lok Sewa students, newly employed at the Agricultural Development Bank. The program emphasized foundational leadership skills, resilience, and personal well-being. Participants engaged in motivational sessions aimed at recognizing and expressing their unique potential. Structured breathing exercises, effective stress management techniques, and guided discussions on communication and

self-management enabled attendees to develop a confident and adaptable approach to their roles. Team-building activities fostered collaboration and strengthened interpersonal relationships, while strategies for building resilience equipped participants to overcome challenges.

## Ethical Leadership & Stress Management Training for Senior Executives

The two-day program for senior executives emphasized ethical leadership principles, advanced stress management techniques, and mindfulness. Participants engaged in case studies, group discussions, and role-play scenarios to practice handling complex ethical dilemmas while learning to foster trust and transparency within their teams. Our training program was meticulously designed to address various aspects of holistic well-being, encompassing mindfulness, stress management, emotional resilience, and interpersonal skills. Each session targeted specific themes and methodologies, enhancing both personal and professional development.

Through this comprehensive approach, the training promoted a holistic vision, striving for a disease-free, quiver-free, stress-free, confusion/obsession-free, trauma-free, embracing-all, and blissful existence. The careful crafting of each session aimed to enhance emotional resilience and interpersonal skills, equipping participants with the tools needed to navigate the complexities of their leadership roles effectively.

Led by Neeva M. Pradhan, Director of Corporate Programs for Nepal, and Achut Gautam, along with experienced facilitators from the Art of Living organization, each session was designed to be relevant, insightful, and engaging.

## Program Features

While tailored for different audiences, both programs shared a holistic approach with the following core components:

- **Breathing Techniques and Mindfulness:** Techniques to improve calmness, focus, and emotional resilience.
- **Ethical Decision-Making Frameworks:** For the Ethical Leadership training, sessions emphasized ethical considerations in leadership decisions, providing practical strategies to handle real-life challenges with integrity.
- **Leadership Development:** The Youth Empowerment Seminar encouraged participants to harness their potential and adopt a proactive leadership mindset, enhancing confidence in self-expression.
- **Work-Life Integration and Stress Management:** Practical tools were shared to effectively manage both personal and professional responsibilities.

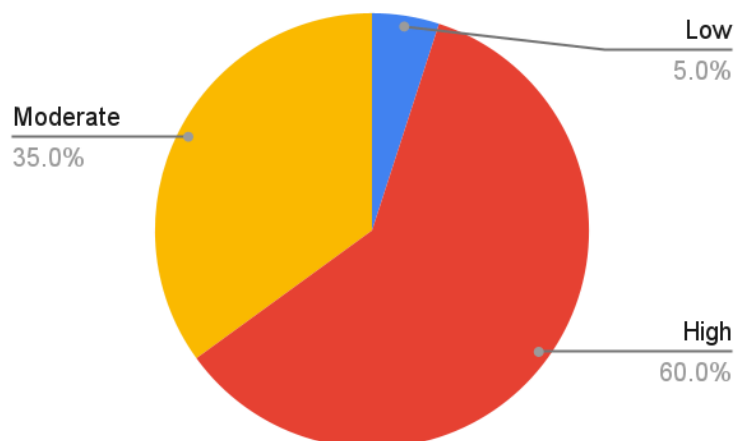
- **Building Trust and Accountability:** Ethical leadership training reinforced the importance of fostering a culture of openness, mutual respect, and fairness within the organization.

The comprehensive design of both programs reflects a commitment to promoting holistic well-being and empowering individuals to thrive in their professional and personal lives.

## Program Impact and Feedback

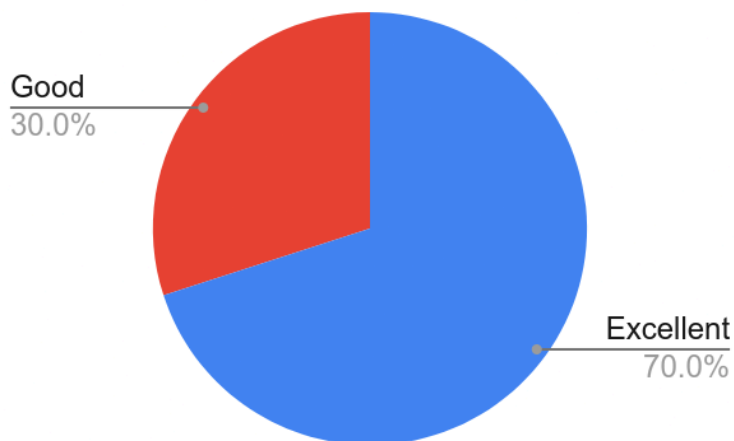
The feedback from both the **Youth Empowerment Seminar** and the **Ethical Leadership & Stress Management Training** demonstrated significant positive effects on participants' emotional resilience, ethical awareness, and overall well-being.

- **Program Benefits:** Participants across both programs experienced enhanced clarity of mind, increased energy levels, improved emotional resilience, and stronger social connections. The holistic approach of both seminars effectively contributed to participants' overall well-being.
- **Stress Management:** Many attendees reported a notable reduction in stress levels following the training sessions. The stress management techniques introduced were particularly effective, enabling participants to feel more centered and capable of navigating challenges.

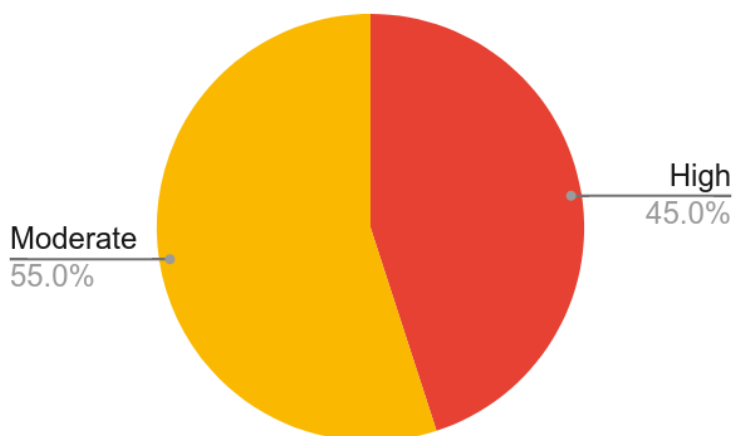


- **Program Quality:** Feedback on the overall quality of both programs was overwhelmingly positive. Participants praised the relevance of the content, the

engaging delivery by facilitators, and the practical applications of the skills learned.

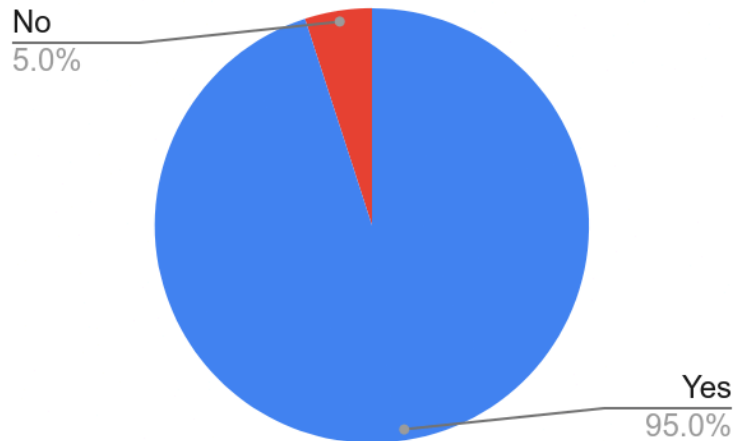


- **Immediate Benefits:** Participants reported immediate improvements in work-life balance, greater clarity of thought, and enhanced emotional well-being. The seminars provided tools and techniques that participants could readily apply to their personal and professional lives.



- **Ability to Handle Work Challenges:** Post-training feedback indicated that participants felt better equipped to handle work challenges with greater resilience and focus. The skills learned during the sessions empowered attendees to face their

responsibilities more confidently.



- **Recommendation, Gratitude, and Overall Satisfaction:** A majority of participants expressed their willingness to recommend both programs to colleagues, highlighting their gratitude for the training opportunities provided. Overall satisfaction with both seminars was high, with a 100% positive response rate across multiple feedback metrics, underscoring the success of these initiatives in fostering a meaningful and impactful learning experience.

## Participant Demographics

The training programs attracted a diverse group of participants, showcasing a balanced representation of genders and a wide range of ages, highlighting the programs' relevance across different demographics.

### Gender Representation:

- The Youth Empowerment Seminar included both male and female participants, with females slightly outnumbering males. This diverse gender representation allowed for varied perspectives and experiences during the training.
- In the Ethical Leadership & Stress Management Training, there was a predominance of male participants, particularly in senior leadership positions. This balance in gender representation enriched discussions and collaborative learning.

### Age Distribution:

- Participants from the Youth Empowerment Seminar ranged from 23 to 35 years old, indicating a younger demographic, which is crucial for developing future leaders and instilling essential life skills early on.

- The Ethical Leadership & Stress Management Training featured a more mature audience, with participants aged between 39 and 57 years, demonstrating the program's appeal to experienced professionals seeking to enhance their leadership and stress management capabilities.

#### Job Title/Position:

- In the Youth Empowerment Seminar, participants held various roles such as Business Assistants and Loan Assistants, reflecting entry-level and mid-level positions. This exposure allowed them to develop skills that are vital for their career progression.
- The Ethical Leadership & Stress Management Training comprised senior-level participants, including CEOs, department heads, and division chiefs, highlighting the program's effectiveness in addressing the complexities faced by experienced leaders in high-stress environments.

Overall, this diverse participant pool experienced significant benefits from the programs, including improvements in emotional resilience, productivity, and stress management, reinforcing the importance of holistic training approaches for all levels within the organization.

## Participant Testimonials

Below are a few participant testimonials that reflect the impact of the training:

1. **Govinda Gurung, CEO:** "The AOL iExcel Holistic Wellbeing Programme has been instrumental in managing work-life stress, enhancing personal well-being, and boosting productivity in the workplace. It connects humanity with nature, fosters team spirit, and promotes compassion for all living things. This program is invaluable for professionals at all levels."
2. **Neetu Acharya, Department Head:** "The Leadership & Stress Management program was exceptional. Over the three days, I learned effective breathing techniques that greatly increased my energy levels. Thank you for such an enriching experience."
3. **Prem Kumar Shrestha, Department GM:** "This program is essential for all staff, particularly in the banking and financial sectors where stress levels are high. It provides vital skills to manage stress effectively. A commendable initiative by our bank."
4. **Jagadishwor Panthy, Department Head:** "This is a wonderful program that not only minimizes stress but also enhances energy levels. It has significantly helped me balance my work life, and I highly appreciate the insights gained from it."



5. **Saroj Kumar Sah, Department Head - Credit:** "I am grateful to ADBL and our CEO for the opportunity to participate in this life-changing program. It has encouraged me to find balance in my work and social life."
6. **Rama Lama, Business Assistant (Youth Empowerment Seminar):** "Overall, the program was energizing and created a positive impact among us. The combination of meditation, active participation, and teamwork through small tasks was delightful. Thank you!"
7. **Chetana Kadariya, Business Assistant (Youth Empowerment Seminar):** "Meditation and learning are symbols of peace. We experienced tranquility during the program, along with motivation, team building, and enjoyable interactions. I truly appreciated the experience."
8. **Sawan Rajbanshi, Credit Assistant (Youth Empowerment Seminar):** "I feel that the program was engaging and effective overall. It provided valuable insights that I can apply to both my personal and professional life."

These testimonials illustrate the participants' positive experiences and the significant impact of the training on their personal and professional lives.

## Media Coverage

The Ethical Leadership & Stress Management Training at ADBL received significant media attention, highlighting the impact of these programs on participants and the broader community. Below are some featured articles:

1. [Sunakhari News \(https://www.sunakharinews.com/243561/?id=67\)](https://www.sunakharinews.com/243561/?id=67)
2. [Bizshala \(https://www.bizshala.com/article/8895\)](https://www.bizshala.com/article/8895)
3. [Singhadarbar \(https://singhadarbar.com/post/152852/\)](https://singhadarbar.com/post/152852/)

## Conclusion

The Youth Empowerment Seminar and Ethical Leadership & Stress Management Training at ADBL successfully empowered participants with valuable tools for resilience, ethical awareness, and leadership. Under the guidance of Neeva M. Pradhan and Achut Gautam, along with skilled facilitators, the programs delivered a transformative experience that left participants feeling more centered, motivated, and ethically aware.

To sustain these benefits, four follow-up sessions will be offered over the next two months. Participants are encouraged to join daily group kriya sessions via Zoom, facilitated through a dedicated WhatsApp group, to maintain their 40-day commitment and continue their journey of well-being and ethical leadership.

ADBL's investment in these programs underscores its dedication to fostering a supportive, resilient, and ethically grounded organizational culture. By equipping individuals with both leadership and ethical decision-making skills, ADBL strengthens its foundation for growth and positions itself as a leader in corporate responsibility and employee well-being. Through ongoing initiatives like these, ADBL is committed to empowering its workforce and advancing a positive, values-driven work environment that benefits individuals, the organization, and society at large.