

# HEATHER R. LAURENCE

## Director | Business Operations & Program Management

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### WHAT I BRING

An Executive MBA and Business Operations & Program Management leader with twenty years of experience who can efficiently manage multiple complex business functions and technology programs. Strong sense of ownership and urgency with the ability to effectively influence others to accomplish strategic goals.

My superpower is in organization: improving people, processes, and tools wherever I go. Bringing experienced enthusiasm, a strong work ethic, and a growth mindset to everything I do enables me to build relationships and work cross-functionally with multiple company divisions. I value optimism, empathy, collaboration, and giving back through mentorship.

What's my why? I work because I am a serial achiever, addicted to responsibility, and I love designing processes. I want to leave the world better than I found it and give the life to my family that I did not have growing up.

“Leadership is not about being in charge. It is about taking care of those in your charge.” ~Simon Sinek

### CORE SKILL AREAS

- Business Operations
- Program Management
- Process Improvement
- Change Management
- People Management
- Planning & Strategy
- Communication
- Relationship Building
- Stakeholder Management

### KEY FOCUS AREAS

- GenAI & Machine Learning
- Software Development
- Release Management
- Cloud Architecture
- Data Engineering
- Platforms & Migrations

### HIGHER EDUCATION

#### MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (M.B.A.) | EXECUTIVE

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

- Class President | Graduate Business Council
- President | Graduate Women in Business Student Org
- Student Service & Leadership Award Winner
- McCombs+ Leadership Fellow

#### BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.) | HISTORY

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

- Magna Cum Laude
- Distinguished College Scholar with Highest Honors
- College of Liberal Arts Dean's List Award Winner

### EXPERIENCE – NEXT PAGE

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### MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

#### DIRECTOR BUSINESS OPERATIONS | GENERATIVE AI

VISA | June 2025 - Present

- Serve as Chief of Staff to the VP of Corporate Generative AI, co-leading strategy and operations for a 36-person global team that has delivered \$10M+ in quantified ROI and 110,000 annualized hours of productivity savings across Visa's 42,000-person workforce in FY25.
- Oversaw deployment of 25+ AI and automation products — including a flagship agentic IT support assistant adopted by 80%+ of Visa employees with 25% weekly active retention — translating AI strategy into measurable business impact at scale.
- Architected the OKR and performance framework used to quantify productivity and ROI across the CGAI portfolio, enabling data-driven prioritization and providing leadership with continuous visibility into outcomes, risks, and investment decisions.
- Drive end-to-end business operations, including annual planning, workforce planning, and budget management for a high-growth function, ensuring resource allocation and delivery roadmaps remain tightly aligned to enterprise priorities.

#### GLOBAL PROGRAM MANAGER | SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT

WESTERN UNION | October 2024 - June 2025

- Managed all aspects of program delivery for a greenfield fintech application with a \$10M budget.
- Led teams of over 100 global resources, including design, technology, and GTM, driving the product delivery lifecycle.
- Reinvented how the company does business digitally and how the PMO plans and executes large-scale programs using Jira and Jira Align.

#### DIRECTOR PROGRAM MANAGEMENT | MACHINE LEARNING

EXPEDIA GROUP | December 2021 - October 2023

- Directed a team of seventeen Technical Program Managers to develop and manage the Machine Learning Project Lifecycle for multiple high-value consumer AI & ML products, supporting over 150 ML Scientists and ML Engineers and over 250 company-wide stakeholders.
- Oversaw program to build a custom Machine Learning platform to automate data workflows, accelerate data processing, and optimize ML deployments for multiple complex programs, generating > than \$100M in gross profits.
- Managed the development, collection, and reporting of metrics, a program that tracked over 95% of the 300+ company portfolio of machine learning models and 400+ organizational initiatives for the 850-person Data & AI organization.
- Collaborated with VPs and above on multiple projects from ideation through implementation including Personalization, Generative AI, and Reinforcement Learning.
- Developed the company-wide talent identification program to recruit, hire, and grow dozens of newly graduated Program Managers to build Expedia Group's early career talent pipeline.
- Chaired the learning committee for Program Management, produced the annual Data & AI Conference event, and was President of the Austin Chapter of Women in Technology ERG.

#### SENIOR MANAGER PROGRAM MANAGEMENT | MACHINE LEARNING

EXPEDIA GROUP | May 2021 - December 2021

- Managed a team of seven Technical Program Managers to develop innovative AI & ML products that enhanced user experience in three major brands under the Expedia Group umbrella.

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- Identified the need for various process improvements and worked with direct reports to innovate multiple processes that saved time and improved workflow efficiency, including the Quarterly Roadmap Review, portfolio metrics, and RACI matrices.
- Mentored and trained five Program Managers and eight Women in Technology members, facilitating improved performance ratings, additional promotions, and the advancement or attainment of full-time roles in IT.

### SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER | MACHINE LEARNING

EXPEDIA GROUP | Jun 2018 - May 2021

- Served as the Program Manager and Scrum Master for five unique teams of over 50 Machine Learning Scientists and Engineers to conduct research and develop algorithms to solve business problems and increase product value.
- Managed the full lifecycle of multiple successful AI & Machine Learning programs that generated over \$20 million in gross profits, including Reinforcement Learning, Recommendations, Computer Vision, Content, and more.
- Collaborated with ML Science Director to track quarterly OKRs - achieving 80% of targeted milestones (+15%)
- Mapped and developed project timelines & milestones for high-profile, multi-million-dollar budget ML programs.
- Identified risks and communicated status to executives and stakeholders to ensure successful project completion.
- Set Agile goals and coached teams on best practices to facilitate epic and story generation, including JIRA system administration.
- Recognized by Management as a 'One Team Culture Superstar' & awarded 'Gold Star' for outstanding performance.

### SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER | SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT

BLACKBAUD | May 2014 - Jun 2018

- Served as the Project Manager and Scrum Master for three unique development teams of over 25 Software Engineers & QA to successfully manage multiple projects simultaneously through the product release pipeline.
- Closely collaborated with Product and Engineering Managers to shape project scope and timelines, mitigate risks, and remove roadblocks to deliver quality software features for a flagship product that generated over \$100M in annual sales revenues.
- Managed the release and deployment cycle for six products, including change control, artifacts, process steps, operations, and risks.
- Facilitated defect and escalation management, including assignment, research, and remediation processes for six products.
- Headed PMO projects, including system migration, executive reporting, and project accounting to ensure successful project implementation.

### CERTIFICATIONS

- LEAN SIX SIGMA GREEN BELT
- NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING MASTER PRACTITIONER
- FORMER PMP & CERTIFIED SCRUM MASTER

### IN MY OFF TIME

When I'm not enabling others to succeed, I love to read, game, sing, spend time with my family, and travel. We've been to 38 states in our giant RV! I'm also a McCombs School of Business Alumni Advisory Board Member as well as an Austin Digital Jobs Advisory Board Member, which allows me to apply my skills and continue helping others outside of my day-to-day work.