

Innovating Leadership & Culture

#3'2024

The Emotional
Intelligence
Edition



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only EQ program
I recommend
because...



Dr. Travis Bradberry

- It's the only program that offers **12 weeks of executive coaching and EQ nudges** to ensure habit formation
- It's the only program that offers **unlimited free retests** so you can track improvement over time
- It's the only program with **52 world-class EQ strategies** to ensure immediate on-the-job impact."



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The Emotional Intelligence Edition



Dear Readers of *Leadership & Culture Magazine*,

I'm usually a bit "anti-topic." Topics tend to be too trendy, too interest-based, and too divorced from the business. That said, certain topics transcend these problems. These topics tend to be more evergreen, more foundational. And perhaps no

topic is more worthy of the "foundational" label than emotional intelligence (EQ).

Since the release of Dr. Daniel Goleman's book *Emotional Intelligence* in 1995, EQ has revolutionized the way we educate, interact with family and friends, and, of course, lead. As Dr. Goleman shared in his interview with LEADx: "When I first wrote *Emotional Intelligence* there was very little data...It was a hunch...Now there's very strong data (meta-analyses) that support the model and show that it helps people to be more engaged and productive." Here are a few compelling examples:

- As much as 58% of overall job performance can be attributed to EQ*
- College students who tested higher on EQ assessments prior to graduation had higher salaries 10-12 years later**
- At L'Oreal, salespeople who were recruited for EQ outsold their peers by over \$90,000***

The list of eyebrow-raising studies can (and does) go on.

Personally, I've been working in the field of EQ and writing about it for ten years now. I've written everything from articles to workshop curriculums,

proposals, case studies, and even the book *Team Emotional Intelligence 2.0*. In all that time, the most excited I've ever been about EQ is right now. That's because my company LEADx is about to launch what I consider to be the best EQ workshop in the world (think world-class coaches, a highly engaging curriculum, video clips from *Ted Lasso* and the Grammy's). And, perhaps most importantly, the workshop is designed to make learning stick. Anyone who attends our Emotional Intelligence Habits workshop will leave with:

- regular access to an EQ-certified coach
- behavioral nudges tailored to their assessment results
- an EQ microlearning module

To celebrate the launch of our workshop, I'm deeming this issue of *Innovating Leadership & Culture* the official "Emotional Intelligence Edition." It includes an interview with Dr. Daniel Goleman and an article written by Dr. Travis Bradberry, the author of *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* and *Emotional Intelligence Habits*.

Evan Watkins
Editor

P.S. Scan the QR code here to take our EQ assessment. It's free, takes 5-10 minutes to complete, and is fully validated.



Innovating Leadership and Culture

LEADx®

CEO of LEADx
Kevin Kruse, kevin@leadx.org

Editor
Evan Watkins, evan@leadx.org

Vice President, Leadership Strategy at LEADx
Christine MacAdams, christine@leadx.org

Head of OD at LEADx
Kevin Thomas, kevinthomas@leadx.org

Layout design
Kiryl Lysenka

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LEADx Inc.
1650 Market Street Center City West
Suite 3600,
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(267) 702-6760
leadx.org

* Drs. Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves in their book *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*.

** Drs. Daniel Goleman and Cary Cherniss in their book *Optimal*.

*** Cary Cherniss in "The Business Case for Emotional Intelligence"

RESEARCH

9 Insights From The 2024 Leadership Development Benchmark Report

The 2024 LEADx Leadership Development Benchmark Report just came out. The 23-page report drew on an in-depth survey of 145 companies as well as qualitative interviews with over 50 CPOs and heads of leadership development. Entitled “Leadership Development Must Prove Its Value in 2024,” it covers:

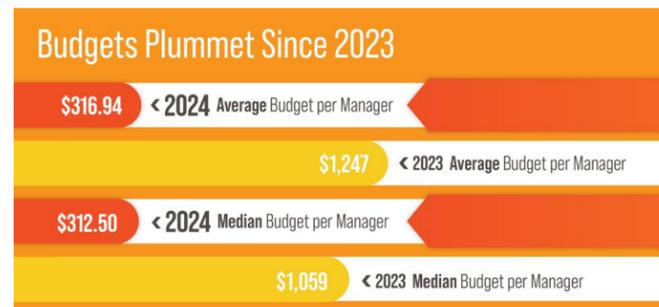
- Top priorities for 2024
- The most in-demand skills for 2024
- Change in average budget and team size since 2023
- How leadership development professionals use AI in their work
- And much more!

What follows are the nine of the most important insights from the report. Bring these insights to your company and your career and you might just gain that competitive edge you’re looking for.

1 Budget & Team Size Shrunk—Dramatically

The average budget and team size both decreased by over 70% since 2023. This aligns with what I’ve heard in my interviews with heads of leadership development: There have been drastic layoffs and budget cuts.

As often happens in tough times, loss of budget and resources can trigger a big “rethink moment.” For leadership development professionals, this has come in the form of a strong shift in mindset. Nowhere is that more apparent than in the top five priorities list for 2024.



Average and median budgets declined by more than 70%.

2 Proof of Impact Became a Top Priority

Of the top five priorities, three link directly to proof of impact:

- Employee Engagement
- Measurement & Data
- ROI

None of these showed up as priorities in 2023. This goes to show just how much rethinking is happening in leadership development. Leadership development professionals see the writing on the wall: If they can’t prove their value, they’re going to lose even more budget and resources. While this has always been true, it became a reality in 2023 due to tougher economic conditions.

My bet is that long term this will prove to be a healthy growth moment for leadership development. Short-term, it may be painful as leadership development professionals get tasked with “doing more with less” both in headcount and budget.

3 The Top 4 Metrics to Prove Value in 2024 (All Are Impact-Based)

Naturally, the next question on everyone’s mind: What will I measure to prove my impact? The top four measures were:

1. Employee Engagement
2. Retention, Turnover, & Promotion
3. Manager Effectiveness
4. Behavior Change

You can see how any leadership development professional who shows improvement across one of these four metrics would be well-positioned to express their work’s value.

4 Measuring Business Impact Will Be New for Most

Despite being eager to measure business impact, most did not in 2023. Less than half of leadership development professionals measured behavior change (39%) and business impact (22%). Yet, nearly 90% measured learner reaction.

Starting fresh isn’t inherently bad. It means you have an opportunity to build a strong foundation. It also means you don’t have to overcome bad habits or escape expensive contracts. It’s an opportunity to set up a new system of measurement that will help show your value for years to come.

5 The Most In-Demand Leadership Skills Are ‘Tried and True’

While priorities may shift year to year, the top ten most in-demand skills remained essentially the same. Here are the top three:

- Coaching Skills for Managers
- Leading Change
- Feedback

All three made the top ten last year, and coaching skills and leading change remained the top two for the second year in a row. This shows that the “classic” topics are here for a reason. To drive impact, you don’t necessarily need to reinvent the wheel in terms of what you train. The difference is in how you train these topics and how you set out to measure improvement.

6 The Top 5 Challenges Are Tied to Impact (Or Lack Thereof)

It may not come as a surprise that the top five challenges for leadership development professionals each tie back to proving impact:

1. Learners Say “no time for training” — Prove impact, win learner buy-in.
2. Budget — Prove impact, win budget.
3. Lack of Manager and C-level Support — Prove impact, win C-level buy-in.
4. Participation — See bullet one.
5. L&D Headcount — See bullet two.

2024 needs to be the year that leadership development digs its way out of the “cost center” stereotype. Setting up guardrails against each of the above challenges will go a long way.

7 The Knowing-Doing Gap Still Plagues Leadership Development

When I talk about impact, I don’t just mean measurement. Sure, that’s a huge piece of proving value. But, the other equally big piece is your success at creating value. To create value, you have to overcome the knowing-doing gap. You have to help your learners build new positive habits. If you don’t properly reinforce learning and make it stick, you won’t have nearly as big an impact as you could. If learning doesn’t get applied, no amount of measurement will save you.

0 to 10:	3%
10 to 20:	17%
20 to 30:	20%
30 to 40:	11%
40 to 50:	24%
50 to 60:	8%
60 to 70:	8%
70 to 80:	5%
80 to 90:	3%
90 to 100:	1%

“What % of your training do you estimate gets applied on the job?”

On that note, 75% of leadership development professionals estimate that less than half of what they train gets applied on the job. See below for a more in-depth breakdown. A concerning 17% indicated that less than 20% of what they train gets applied on the job.

When it comes to the knowing-doing gap, many companies expressed to me that they feel “stuck.” They can’t afford to pull learning through via one-on-one coaching, especially at the emerging leader and first-line leader level. And at the same time, they know workbooks, job aids, and asking leaders to practice isn’t enough.

For that reason, I predict many leadership development professionals will begin to embrace learning transfer tech like:

- **Personalized Behavioral Nudges:** A simple way to double, triple, or quadruple the value of an existing assessment or training program. You can take a one-and-done program/assessment and add a year-long tail of strategic exercises and key insights.
- **On-Demand Coaching:** Hugely expands the number of employees that you can offer coaching to. Meets employees at the exact moment that they need help with a challenge.
- **Group Coaching:** A scalable and affordable way to give more leaders access to coaching. And, peers learn from each other’s insights, challenges, and perspectives.

8 Leadership Development Is Mandatory at Just 54% of Companies

This stat from our leadership development benchmark survey made me sad. We asked: Is leadership development mandatory at your organization?

And only 54% said “yes.”

Leaders are responsible for the happiness, engagement, and health of their direct reports. Leaders drive performance and accountability. Leaders reinforce culture. Leaders have a sacred duty. Yet, 46% of companies make leadership development optional.

To give all this power and authority to someone and say that they don’t have to complete any leadership development training is a huge oversight. On a positive note, this number did increase by 10% from last year, so it does seem to be moving in the right direction.

9 Only 24% of Leadership Development Professionals Use AI

Since the explosion of AI in the second half of 2023, many industries have already seen a fundamental shift in how work gets done. Leadership development hasn’t seen quite the same degree of change. At least not yet. As of now, just 24% of leadership development professionals use AI in their work.

They indicated three primary use cases:

1. **To brainstorm and create content:** Leadership development professionals said they used AI to come up with ideas for content, put together microlearning, and schedule out minute-by-minute agendas for sessions. This use case makes sense as it aligns with the most common way AI is used across industries—Chat GPT.
2. **Personalized behavioral nudges:** Nudge technology makes it possible to hit learners with multiple, personalized touchpoints per week. It’s an affordable and scalable way to implement sound learning science on a budget. It’s the natural solution to not being able to afford and scale one-on-one coaching to emerging leaders and first-line leaders.
3. **Coaching simulations:** A number of leadership development professionals indicated that they use AI to create realistic simulations for leaders. For example, a leader might hold a practice feedback conversation with a direct report.

With only 24% using AI, now is the perfect time for you to start. You can learn from those who are ahead of you and still be an early adopter.

A Need to Simplify

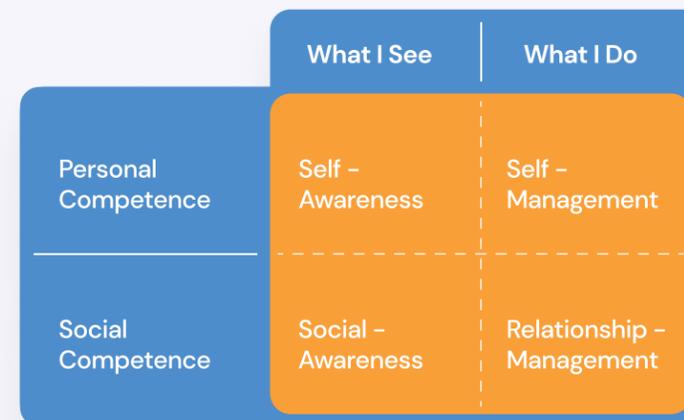
It’s not fun to see budgets and teams get hit so hard, especially since we (leadership development professionals) all know the power of the work we do. When your company is struggling isn’t that really the perfect moment to double down on leadership development? But here’s the good news: Based on the data in this report, an industry-wide “rethink” is already underway. As the industry gets back up and dusts itself off, those who set up a great plan for business impact will stand out in 2024. ■

[READ THE FULL REPORT FOR FREE HERE](#)



Assess EQ and turn results into positive habits.

Grow Your Leaders’ Emotional Intelligence



Help your leaders assess their EQ quickly and accurately. Then turn their results into growth:

- ✓ Send personalized nudges based on your learners’ EQ results
- ✓ Reinforce learning with micro-learning videos, book summaries, and exercises
- ✓ Deliver elite coaching: One-on-one, group, and text-to-coach

“The LEADx app is nothing short of revolutionary. Its AI-driven, on-demand coaching and micro-learning make new leadership behaviors stick.”



Dr. Travis Bradberry,

Author of Emotional Intelligence 2.0 and CPO at LEADx



LEARN FROM THE EXPERTS

Why You Need Emotional Intelligence

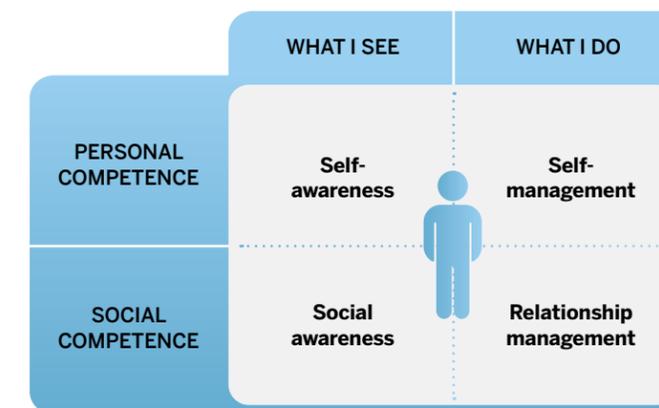
by Dr. Travis Bradberry



When emotional intelligence first appeared to the masses, it served as the missing link in a peculiar finding: people with average IQs outperform those with the highest IQs 70% of the time. This anomaly threw a massive wrench into what many people had always assumed was the sole source of success—IQ. Decades of research now point to emotional intelligence as the critical factor that sets star performers apart from the rest of the pack.

Emotional intelligence is the “something” in each of us that is a bit intangible. It affects how we manage behavior, navigate social complexities, and make personal decisions that achieve positive results. Emotional intelligence is made up of four core skills that pair up under two primary competencies: personal competence and social competence.

Emotional intelligence is made up of four core skills.



Personal competence comprises your self-awareness and self-management skills, which focus more on you individually than on your interactions with other people. Personal competence is your ability to stay aware of your emotions and manage your behavior and tendencies.

- **Self-Awareness** is your ability to accurately perceive your emotions and stay aware of them as they happen.
- **Self-Management** is your ability to use awareness of your emotions to stay flexible and positively direct your behavior.

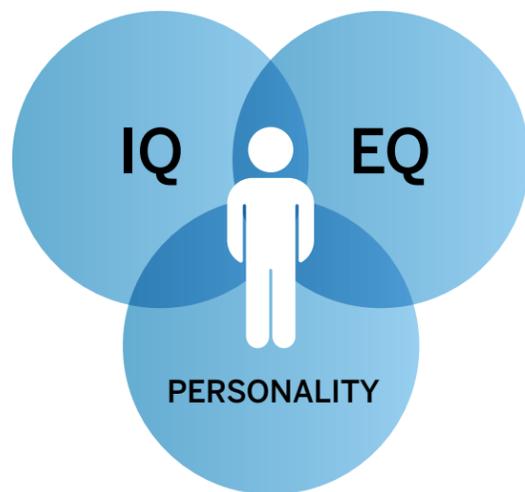
Social competence is made up of your social awareness and relationship management skills; social competence is your ability to understand other people’s moods, behavior, and motives in order to respond effectively and improve the quality of your relationships.

- **Social Awareness** is your ability to accurately pick up on emotions in other people and understand what is really going on.
- **Relationship Management** is your ability to use awareness of your emotions and the others’ emotions to manage interactions successfully.

Emotional Intelligence, IQ, and Personality Are Different

Emotional intelligence taps into a fundamental element of human behavior that is distinct from your intellect. There is no known connection between IQ and emotional intelligence; you simply can't predict emotional intelligence based on how smart someone is. Intelligence is your ability to learn, and it's the same at age 15 as it is at age 50. Emotional intelligence, on the other hand, is a flexible set of skills that can be acquired and improved with practice. Although some people are naturally more emotionally intelligent than others, you can develop high emotional intelligence even if you aren't born with it.

Emotional intelligence is an essential part of the whole person.



Personality is the final piece of the puzzle. It's the stable "style" that defines each of us. Personality is the result of hard-wired preferences, such as the inclination toward introversion or extroversion. However, like IQ, personality can't be used to predict emotional intelligence. Also like IQ, personality is stable over a lifetime and doesn't change. IQ, emotional intelligence, and personality each cover unique ground and help to explain what makes a person tick.

Emotional Intelligence Predicts Performance

How much of an impact does emotional intelligence have on your professional success? The short answer is: a lot! It's a powerful way to focus your energy in one direction with a tremendous result. In preparing my new book, I

tested emotional intelligence alongside 33 other important workplace skills, and found that emotional intelligence is the strongest predictor of performance, explaining a full 58% of success in all types of jobs.

Your emotional intelligence is the foundation for a host of critical skills—it impacts most everything you do and say each day.

Emotional intelligence is the foundation for critical skills.



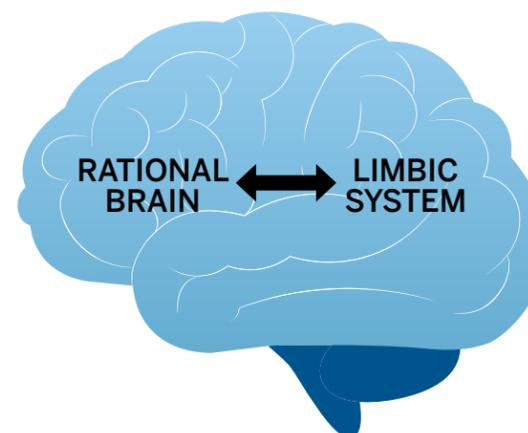
Of all the people I've studied at work, I've found that 90% of top performers are also high in emotional intelligence. On the flip side, just 20% of bottom performers are high in emotional intelligence. You can be a top performer without emotional intelligence, but the chances are slim.

Naturally, people with a high degree of emotional intelligence make more money—an average of \$29,000 more per year than people with a low degree of emotional intelligence. The link between emotional intelligence and earnings is so direct that every point increase in emotional intelligence adds \$1,300 to an annual salary. These findings hold true for people in all industries, at all levels, in every region of the world. I haven't yet been able to find a job in which performance and pay aren't tied closely to emotional intelligence.

You Can Increase Your Emotional Intelligence

The communication between your emotional and rational "brains" is the physical source of emotional intelligence. The pathway for emotional intelligence starts in the brain, at the spinal cord. Your primary senses enter here and must travel to the front of your brain before you can think rationally about your experience. However, first they travel through the limbic system, the place where emotions are generated. So, we have an emotional reaction to events before our rational mind is able to engage. Emotional intelligence requires effective communication between the rational and emotional centers of the brain.

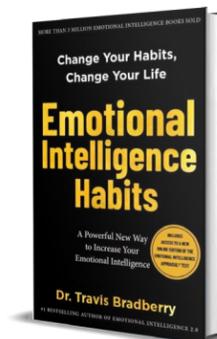
Emotional intelligence is a balance between the rational and emotional brain.



Plasticity is the term neurologists use to describe the brain's ability to change. As you discover and practice new emotional intelligence skills, the billions of microscopic neurons lining the road between the rational and emotional centers of your brain branch off small "arms" (much like a tree) to reach out to the other cells. A single cell can grow 15,000 connections with its neighbors. This chain reaction of growth ensures it's easier to kick a new behavior into action in the future.

As you train your brain by repeatedly practicing new emotionally intelligent behaviors, your brain builds the pathways needed to make them into habits. Before long, you begin responding to your surroundings with emotional intelligence without even having to think about it. And just as your brain reinforces the use of new behaviors, the connections supporting old, destructive behaviors will die off as you learn to limit your use of them. ■

Dr. Travis Bradberry is the award-winning author of the #1 best-selling book, *Emotional Intelligence Habits*. His bestselling books have sold more than 3 million copies. Dr. Bradberry has written for, or been covered by, *Newsweek*, *TIME*, *BusinessWeek*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *Fast Company*, *USA Today*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Harvard Business Review*.



5 Actions Managers Can Take to Support Employee Career Development

Gallup found that organizations that make strategic investments in employee development report 11% greater profitability. They are also twice as likely to retain their employees. But most companies struggle to support career growth. Public opinion research company The Harris Poll surveyed 1,433 full-time employees at 310 workplaces and found that 77% of employees feel "on their own" to develop their careers.

Perhaps the single best way a company can invest in employee development is through their managers. Managers are uniquely positioned to help their employees invest in career development.

By taking the following five actions, managers can help employees feel less "on their own."

Many Employees Are Still Figuring Out How to Manage Their Careers (And That's Okay!)

When I ask leaders how they manage their own careers, they say things like, "I learn by trial and error," "I'm not sure," or "I'm still figuring it out." This affirms how challenging it can be to acquire the career navigation skills you need to feel confident.

But these same leaders who are struggling to manage their own careers, are tasked with supporting and co-facilitating their employees' career growth. This creates a domino effect: managers aren't confident in their abilities to foster their own careers, which makes it all the more difficult to support their team members.

How Managers Play Supportive Roles in Employee Career Development

I've developed five plays for people managers to support their employees' career development. For each play, I have included specific actions managers can take to support their employees' career development journeys.

1. Amplify Their Work

Managers can identify where employees are doing great and amplify and share their work with key people, such as stakeholders, peers, or leaders. Your stamp of approval can enhance their personal brand and help them gain additional exposure and opportunities to elevate their careers.

Two things are critical to amplifying your employees' work. First, managers should know and understand what their employees are doing and how they are making an impact. Second, managers should go out of their way to communicate this impact within the organization.

ACTIONS AND BEHAVIORS

- Encourage your employees to track their accomplishments and projects and review them regularly.
- Regularly promote and share your team's work with your stakeholders and leaders.

2. Redesign the Role to Their Strengths

Managers can assign tasks, assignments, and projects that are more appealing to employees or leverage their strengths or interests. By asking and learning what makes an employee light up or what leverages their strengths and using that to inform how they assign work, managers can ensure the right people are working on the right projects.

ACTIONS AND BEHAVIORS

- Ask your employees what they would like to do more of and what they would like to do less of. Then find a way to redesign their roles and responsibilities based on that insight.
- Identify a specific task or project they did a good job with and enjoyed doing. Work with them to find more opportunities to do that in their specific role.
- Create a side project for them to explore a specific skill, task, or interest.

3. Create Opportunities

Managers can use their perspectives and experiences to spot and create opportunities for employees, especially ones they cannot see or get on their own. You might provide a stretch project, write a recommendation for a leadership program, or get your employee included in a cross-functional project with exposure to senior leaders.

ACTIONS AND BEHAVIORS

- Identify specific opportunities like stretch projects, side projects, or ERGs that employees on your team can participate in and encourage them to participate.
- Make nominations for team members to participate in leadership development or high-potential programs.
- Find an industry conference relevant to your team members and secure the budget and resources so they can attend.

4. Connecting Your People to People

Using their social and career capital, managers can facilitate introductions to new people. Through thoughtful introductions, managers can help their direct reports build social capital, create new opportunities, enhance their personal brands, and foster short and long-term growth. This also helps employees improve their engagement and connection to their job.

ACTIONS AND BEHAVIORS

- Identify two to three people you can introduce your direct report to who would enhance their opportunities inside your organization.
- Speak to your employees about a specific career goal and identify one or two people who would be great to speak with to help them accomplish that goal.

- Help your employees get the right support by identifying the help they need (i.e., a peer, mentor, or thought partner) and then connect them with those people.

5. Provide Career Feedback

Managers are uniquely positioned to offer employees valuable feedback. By observing an employee's work over time and discussing key motivators, you can offer feedback that will help your employee develop and grow.

Examples of helpful feedback to an employee include targeting career development goals, noticing when an employee is using their strengths, or highlighting if an employee is progressing in a skill. Since we cannot always see ourselves clearly, a manager can provide a perspective on career development that might otherwise go unnoticed.

ACTIONS AND BEHAVIORS

We encourage managers to regularly and consistently provide the 3 Ps of effective career development feedback:

- **Prompts:** A prompt is a question, idea, or conversation starter that encourages an employee to take action.
- **Pulses:** Pieces of data and insight you observe and see about how your employees work, their words or actions, or past work experiences you share with them.
- **Paths:** A path constitutes a series of steps or actions that employees can take toward a specific goal or outcome.

Elevate The Potential of Each Employee

Employees with managers who are invested in their career development through words and actions are more likely to stay and continue to perform. Practice the five strategies in this article to play your part in helping your employees rise to their potential. ■



Al Dea is a talent and leadership development consultant, facilitator, and keynote speaker. He is the Founder of The Edge of Work, a talent and leadership development firm that helps organizations develop leaders to improve employee engagement and performance.

Follow Al on LinkedIn



Harnessing the Power of Story to Inspire and Lead

It's the sixth meeting of the day. You're exhausted, and your mind is wandering, half-listening to a voice that drones on like the Peanuts cartoon teacher, "wah wah wah." Suddenly, you hear the speaker say, "I'll tell you a story about it..." and you're pulled back in, your attention captured, the story transforming this complex topic into something more interesting and understandable. This is the magic of storytelling—it's not just about entertainment but about making connections, inspiring action, and bringing clarity to the intricate.

Storytelling is the oldest communication tool, tapping into the fundamental way our brains make meaning. Think about it—have you ever interpreted someone's crossed arms and sigh during a meeting as disagreement? Or inferred from an upward-trending quarterly earnings chart that recent changes were beneficial? Or received a cryptic text from your boss and immediately thought up a story about the worst-case scenario? We constantly weave stories to make sense of data. Cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner aptly said, "Story IS meaning."

Understanding the Levels of Storytelling

Understanding storytelling's pervasive nature allows us to harness its power more effectively. Different levels of story exist to add depth and complexity, making narratives more engaging and meaningful. The levels are:

1. **The Anecdote:** This is the classic story—a self-contained narrative used to explain, engage, or illustrate a point. Anecdotes are powerful due to their simplicity and relatability. For instance, after a challenging project, a manager shares a story about receiving an email from a satisfied client who praised the team's dedication and partnership.
2. **The Key Message:** Humans naturally process information through narrative structures. Treating a presentation or meeting as a cohesive story can engage your audience

more effectively. In an all-hands meeting, the manager gives a presentation on the company's history and future. They highlight key milestones such as the first major client win and the launch of a groundbreaking product. Each milestone is tied to a lesson on collaboration and teamwork.

3. **The Ambient Narrative:** Beyond the stories we tell, there are countless narratives already living in people's heads and in the shared environment. In a company where collaboration is highly valued, there is an ambient narrative that "teamwork leads to success." This narrative is reinforced through informal and formal channels. They celebrate collaborative achievements through awards and recognition programs, fostering a culture where teamwork is seen as essential to success.

Crafting Effective Stories

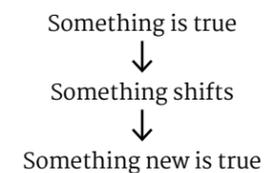
When we tell our stories, we don't tell them into blank spaces, we tell them into minds already filled with stories and associations that may or may not align with our narratives. By realizing this, we can break through the noise to reach our listeners. Here are three critical strategies to make your storytelling impactful:

1. **Make a Point:** Effective storytelling starts with a clear message. Think TED Talk: What is your "idea worth sharing"? Knowing the moral of your story helps streamline your narrative and guide your choices. In a job interview, for example, the point of your story is, "I'm the best person for the job."
2. **Relevance to the Audience:** Different audiences require different stories to convey the same message effectively. Understanding your audience's pre-existing narratives helps craft a story that resonates. Let's say you are announcing a big change at your company. The story you tell senior leaders focuses on profitability and shareholder value. To middle managers, your story emphasizes how the change will reduce daily operational challenges and free up time. The story to customers is faster delivery times.
3. **Choose the Right Type of Story:** Consider these qualities:

- **Yours and Others:** Telling your own stories shows vulnerability and authenticity. Borrowing stories offers diverse perspectives and credibility.
- **Personal and Professional:** Personal stories build relatability and connection, while professional stories provide credibility and insights.
- **Fact or Fiction:** True stories reinforce values, while fictional stories illustrate concepts and engage the imagination. Be clear when a story is fictional to maintain trust.
- **High Fidelity or Low Fidelity:** High-fidelity stories closely match the listener's experience, making them more relatable. For example, a supervisor describes an incident where a fellow employee, John, slipped in the warehouse due to an uncleaned spill. This story strongly resonates with his audience, emphasizing workplace safety. Low-fidelity stories allow listeners to generalize the concept without getting distracted by the specifics. Telling the same story in an office setting during a safety briefing conveys the message but will be lower fidelity because the specific context is less exact to their needs.

The Framework of a Good Story

A good story rests on a strong internal framework, transforming data points into a coherent narrative with cause-and-effect relationships. In essence, a story can be broken down into three parts:



From classics like *Romeo and Juliet* to action movie franchises, good stories feel complete and satisfying when this framework is followed. Identifying and highlighting a clear moment of change in our stories makes our messages stronger and more affecting, engaging and convincing our audiences. The middle isn't just stuff happening; it is stuff happening that causes the end to be different from the beginning.

For instance:

Beginning state: The company had an exceedingly high turnover rate for sales associates. The only performance metric for sales managers was sales results.

Shift: The performance standard changed to include how a sales manager collaborated and worked effectively with their team. Merit pay was closely tied to the new performance standard.

The End State: One year later, the turnover rate was reduced by 10%, sales goals were met, and employee engagement ratings were at their highest levels.

When you have all three elements, you have a stable foundation for a story.

Becoming a Storytelling Leader

By mastering this structure and integrating other storytelling techniques, you can become a more effective communicator. Whether sharing personal experiences or crafting a narrative for a presentation, storytelling can significantly enhance your ability to connect, engage, and inspire your audience. As you hone your storytelling skills, you will unlock a powerful tool for making your messages clearer, more memorable, and ultimately, more impactful.

So, next time you prepare to communicate with your team, clients, or stakeholders, think about the story you want to tell. What message do you want to convey? How can you make it resonate with your audience? By answering these questions, you'll be well on your way to becoming a storytelling leader who not only shares information but also inspires action and change. ■



Therese Miclot is the co-author of *The Facilitation Advantage*. She operates her own consultancy and brings two decades of experience in developing individuals into competent and compassionate leaders. Additionally, she serves as the Director of Facilitation Excellence at Proteus Interna-

tional, where she's a driving force in equipping leaders with everyday facilitation skills. Visit thefacilitationadvantage.com



SLII®: Moving Beyond 'One-Size-Fits-All' To An Agile Approach

The psychologist Abraham Maslow once wrote, "If the only tool you have is a hammer, it is tempting to treat everything as if it were a nail." At its very worst, leadership can suffer from exactly this problem. Well-intentioned leaders pick up a single approach (e.g. coaching) and apply it to every member of their team across every situation. Inevitably, this one-approach leader finds themselves running into a number of mismatch moments (or "hammer meets screw" moments):

- Nancy doesn't want you to coach her; she's brand-new, and she wants you to show her exactly how to build out her marketing campaign.
- Pratik doesn't want your heavy-handed support; he wants to bounce ideas off of you to improve his thinking.
- Tober doesn't want any support from you at all; just trust and recognition as he puts his 20 years of experience into his latest project.

No matter how kind and well-intentioned, a leader like this leaves a wake of frustrated and disengaged team members. This disconnect between leadership approach and employee needs demands a more adaptable model—one that recognizes each individual's varying levels of development on each of their tasks.

To solve for this, Ken Blanchard and his associates at Blanchard® created the adaptive and collaborative leadership model known as SLII®. With SLII®, managers no longer have to choose between various leadership approaches like Autocratic, Servant, Laissez-Faire, and so forth. Leaders can now reach into

their "leadership toolbox" and leverage a multi-purpose tool that addresses any and all leadership situations.

What is SLII®?

The SLII® model places an emphasis on the amount of support and direction needed by an employee on a given task and at a given time. To quote Blanchard®, "SLII® is not something you do to people; it is something you do with people." The model incorporates four leadership styles and four development levels shown in the following image. Instead of adopting a singular leadership style, SLII® promotes regular assessments of employee development stages, clear goal-setting, and tailored feedback. By recognizing and adapting to their team members' changing competence and commitment levels, managers can align their support and guidance to each team member's current needs.

The SLII® Model matches your approach as a leader to the specific needs of your team member.

The Four Development Levels

The SLII® model includes four developmental levels, which you can use to categorize a team member's needs in a given situation.

- D1: "Enthusiastic Beginner" (Low Competence and High Commitment on a task or goal) — When an individual may be inexperienced or brand new to a specific task, but is eager to learn and confident in their abilities.
- D2 the "Disillusioned Learner" (Low/Some Competence and Low Commitment on a task or goal) — When an individual may have little to no knowledge of how to complete a specific task and

has also begun feeling frustrated, overwhelmed, or discouraged.

- D3 the "Capable but Cautious Performer" (Moderate/High Competence and Variable Commitment on a task or goal) — When an individual is fairly experienced and skillful when it comes to completing a specific task, but their commitment to completing it varies. They may be experiencing self-doubt, have not completed the task in a long time, or feel bored, among many other possible reasons.
- D4 the "Self-Reliant Achiever" (High Competence and High Commitment on a task or goal) — When an individual is experienced and consistently produces quality work on a specific task. They are self-assured, and self-reliant and may even inspire others through their performance.

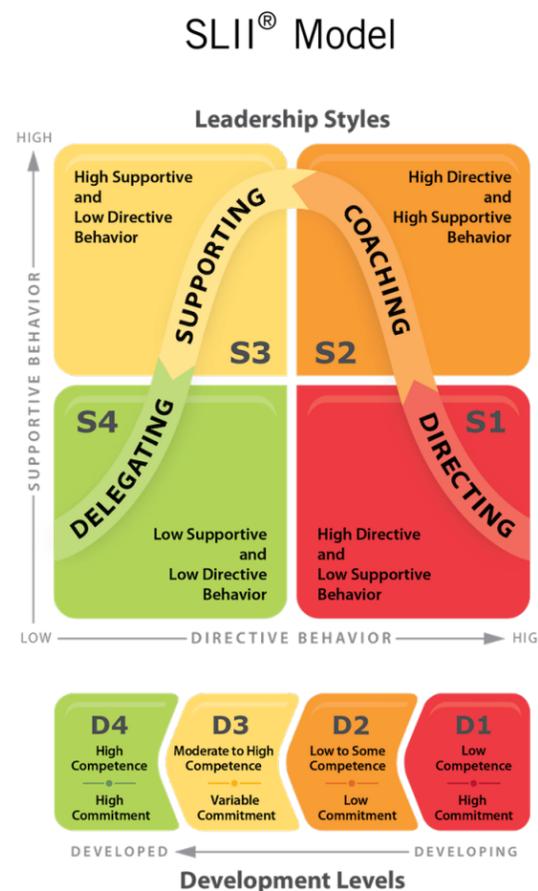
You may have noticed in the descriptions above that I used phrases such as, "on a task or goal", and "when it comes to completing a specific task." This is an important factor in understanding and effectively engaging with the SLII® model. The development levels do not define an individual nor are they meant to put a label on them. The four levels are meant to provide an understanding of where an individual's development may be when it comes to performing a particular task or working towards a set goal. It's a subtle distinction, and one of the most important to remember for the SLII® model.

"You are NOT a development level. You are AT a developmental level on a specific goal or task."

The Four Leadership Styles

Once you "diagnose" your team member's developmental level, you can then match your approach as a leader to their needs. SLII® offers four main styles, one for each developmental level:

- S1: "Directing" (High Directive and Low Supportive Behaviors)— The primary focus of managers who use this leadership style is to plan, show, tell, closely monitor, and give frequent feedback.
- S2: "Coaching" (High Directive and High Supportive Behaviors) — The primary focus of managers who use this leadership style is to explain, redirect, encourage, and praise.
- S3: "Supporting" (Low Directive and High Supportive Behaviors) — The primary focus of managers who use this leadership style is to ask questions, facilitate, listen, encourage, and collaborate.
- S4: "Delegating" (Low Directive and Low Supportive Behaviors) — The primary focus of managers who use this leadership style is to empower, provide resources, trust, affirm, and challenge.



The SLII® Model matches your approach as a leader to the specific needs of your team member.

My Own Development Journey

To bring this to life, let's run through a quick personal example of when I had the goal to become a certified leadership coach.

D1: I first signed up for leadership coach training back in 2020 through the Co-Active Training Institute. I had little knowledge of the Co-Active coaching model, what it meant to be a leadership coach, and how to coach someone. That said, I was eager to get started. I attended the first few training workshops with high enthusiasm, engagement, and participation. When it came to applying the coaching models and techniques in practice sessions, I struggled. My enthusiasm kept me motivated.

D2: The next series of workshops was when reality hit. We dove deeper into the coaching model, and the practice sessions felt more and more advanced. Multiple times, I received tough, constructive feedback from peers and instructors on my coaching performance. I began to question my abilities, "Am I cut out to be a leadership coach?" I felt frustrated, demoralized, and filled with self-doubt as I questioned my decision to enroll in the program.

D3: Still, I paved my way forward through the program. I continued learning about the coaching principles and techniques until my understanding and ability to use them increased. I began receiving positive feedback from my peers and was implementing the coaching tools in creative ways. However, self-doubt was still very prevalent. I went back and forth between feeling capable and questioning my effectiveness as a coach, which impacted my overall commitment and consistency.

D4: By the end of the training program, I solidified the core leadership coaching skills and felt confident in my ability to coach others. I saw the impact of my coaching, which led to a consistently high commitment to continuous improvement. I sought out resources and opportunities to refine my skills.

How to Leverage SLII®

With the information I've shared above, you now have enough to practice SLII®. The next time you speak with a team member about a task or goal they are working on, try to focus on diagnosing their development level and adapting your leadership style to meet their needs. You can also practice SLII at home with your children. Are they learning how to tie their shoes, struggling to complete their homework, or playing an instrument? Identify their specific task, diagnose their development level, and leverage the appropriate leadership style to effectively align your approach. ■



Kevin Thomas is the Director of Coaching Solutions at LEADx. He's an ex-Google OD practitioner, consultant, and certified ICF leadership coach. He's certified in SLII® and popular 360 assessments such as the Leadership Practices Inventory and Leadership Circle Profile.

SLII® Concepts

Great Leaders See the Promise in Everyone

The blistering pace of change demands a different kind of leadership model.

SLII® Concepts teach what it means to lead situationally. That means giving people the right support or direction at the right time, having authentic conversations that empower them, and caring about their growth.

Be their champion. See their promise. SLII Concepts introduce the art of diagnosing an individual's or team's development level and then using the appropriate leadership style in response. Fast-paced, content-rich SLII Concepts is an immersive solution that can be used to introduce or reinforce SLII.

Outcomes



Accelerate development and autonomy



Use a common leadership language



Enhance performance and achievement



Improve engagement and retention



CASE INTERVIEWS

Think ‘Process’ Not ‘Event’ To Develop Your Emerging Leaders



Greg Adamson, Executive Director, Medical Sales Training, and Michelle Taylor, Senior Sales Training Manager, Selling Skills & Leadership

Leadership and manager development is the number one priority for human resource (HR) leaders for next year, according to the Gartner Top 5 HR Trends and Priorities for 2024 report, based on a survey of 520 HR leaders. According to Mark Whittle, vice president of advisory in the Gartner HR practice, “In 2024, the HR function will be impacted by several key trends: an unsettled employee-employer relationship, persistent skills shortage, transformative technology innovations and pressure to achieve operational efficiencies.”

One company that is rising to the challenge while leveraging innovative approaches to leadership development is the medical technology company Olympus Corporation of the Americas. I recently talked to Greg Adamson, Executive Director, Medical Sales Training, and Michelle Taylor, Senior Sales Training Manager, Selling Skills & Leadership.

The new Olympus Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) was born from the need to identify future leaders and give them a developmental path before they actually become managers. As Adamson explained, “The company recognized that the first-line sales manager, who we call the Regional Vice President, is the single most important job in the company.” Traditionally, Olympus, like most companies, followed the “buddy-to-boss” model, promoting successful sales reps directly to managerial positions. However, this approach often overlooked the vital developmental phase necessary to maximize leadership effectiveness.

Selecting Aspiring Leaders With High Potential

Recognizing this gap, Adamson’s team focused on the creation of a new 18-month-long program targeting high-potential aspiring leaders. A selection committee ultimately chose 20 participants from 40 applicants after a thorough application process that included a variety of data such as modeling of Olympus values, sales results, achievements (e.g., field trainer responsibilities, national impact and elite/quota performance), and an essay assignment based upon leadership competencies.

The 20 participants were then organized into smaller sub-teams to continue the journey together in cohorts. “I thought it was really important to form teams very early on so that they could start to get through the forming, storming, norming, performing stages,” said Taylor. These cohorts enabled effective peer coaching while strengthening relationships among the high-potential future leaders.

Pre-Assessments Establish Baseline

The program kicked off with two days of activities at a third-party assessment center. Activities included inbox exercises, team dynamics evaluations, and interactions with professional actors. These activities were designed to evaluate various leadership qualities, and each participant received individual debriefs.

Approximately a month later, participants completed a Hogan personality assessment. Hogan assessments are based on the gold-standard five-factor model of personality and provide a snapshot of Leadership Foundations, Leadership Emergence, and Leadership Effectiveness. In addition to a detailed written report, each participant received one-on-one debriefs on their strengths and developmental areas.

Competencies And Real-World Shadowing

The core of the program consisted of monthly “Classroom Clinics” organized around the Olympus Global Leadership competency model, typically three hours in duration, scheduled on Friday afternoons. Competencies included Strategic Mindset, Cultivate Innovation, Drives Results, Decision Quality, Balancing Stakeholders, Drives Engagement, Collaborates, Develops Talent, Instills Trust, and Situational Adaptability. A key benefit of these Friday afternoon lectures, in addition to skill development, was that the emerging leaders had a chance to interact with senior executives who were invited in as guest speakers.

Another feature of the ELP was a job shadowing component, where participants shadowed experienced managers in various roles within the organization. “They actually listen in during staff calls, they get to participate in the 360-degree rating, and even listen in on mid-year reviews,” explained Adamson. “They get to have a day in their life, but in this case, a trimester in their life.” This element provided practical, real-world insights into leadership roles and responsibilities.

Capstone Projects

The program culminated with a capstone project that cleverly tied into an earlier Olympus innovation program. In the original program, employees were invited to propose new solutions that could generate at least \$3 million in

new revenue. Ultimately, the best idea was selected and chosen for implementation. However, Taylor recognized the potential in the numerous ideas that didn’t make it to the final round. As she explained, “we wanted to find a way to expose the cohort to the internal workings of the organization while also stretching them to grow strategy and innovation competency muscles.”

Seizing this opportunity, Taylor had the ELP cohorts choose from some of the additional ideas and asked them to develop business plans around them. Ultimately, teams presented their business plans to over 30 executives. The plans included go-to market strategies, how to commercialize their plans, P&L, risk analysis, among other things. The “judges” invested a full day to evaluate and decide on the four business plan proposals.

Final 360 Survey Evaluation

After this, all participants did another 360 survey which was then compared to their baseline assessments. Preliminary results show a marked growth in their leadership development, especially around strategic mindset, cultivating innovation, and balancing stakeholders which are competencies they don’t always get to develop driving results as territory managers.

The Takeaway

The ELP program’s blend of virtual and in-person learning, along with the emphasis on real-world application through business plan competitions and job shadowing, exemplifies Olympus’s innovative approach to leadership training. Feedback from program participants highlights the program’s effectiveness in preparing them for advanced leadership positions.

While the program has many different components and complexities, the success, according to Adamson, comes down to this. “Leadership and development is not an event; it’s a process. And if you make it competency-based, it will always be your North Star so that you don’t get lost on your journey.”

Olympus’s Emerging Leader Program represents a significant leap forward in corporate leadership development. By prioritizing competency-based training, continuous assessment, and practical experience, Olympus is not only shaping the future of its leaders but also setting a benchmark for others in the industry. ■

A 5-Pillar Process To Develop First-Line Sales Leaders



Scott Tinkel, Director, FLD, and Craig Neverosky, Associate Director, FLD at Takeda Pharmaceuticals

They developed Level Up to meet a few key needs. First, the FLD Team understood that by investing in the development of in-role sales leaders you elevate the capabilities of the leader. This, in turn, impacts the sales team’s performance. Second, Level Up met the needs of a specific group of leaders at Takeda: First-line Field Leaders who were established in their roles and aspired to develop and take on more responsibility. Lastly, Takeda wanted a program that would bring leaders from 15 different sales teams together while also offering individualized learning delivered just in time and in the flow of work.

At the program’s end, 83% of leaders already showed significant improvement in leadership performance. Qualitative feedback from supervisors indicates improvement in self-awareness, confidence, strategic thinking, communication skills, and more.

Tinkel and Neverosky attribute their success to five main pillars.

Pillar 1: Assess Your Core Leadership Competencies

Based on Takeda’s existing first-line sales leader competency model, Tinkel and Neverosky worked with Vaya Group™ to develop a custom 360 assessment. This 360 helped establish a benchmark of strengths and areas for improvement. High level, the assessment measured each leader’s ability to:

- Cultivate Talent
- Navigate Change
- Engage Teams
- Deliver Results

The assessment and results then set the stage for the Level Up program. Participants entered the program with a data-backed benchmark of their skills.

Sales leaders are the lever for a high-performing sales organization. One study cited in the Harvard Business Review found that 69% of sales reps who exceeded quota rated their managers highly. The same study showed that just 3% of reps who gave their leaders low ratings then turned around and gave their organization a high rating. In other words, how a rep views their leader is how they view the organization.

Despite all signs pointing to sales leadership as mission-critical, most organizations fall short. They don’t offer enough leadership development, or if they do, it doesn’t drive enough impact.

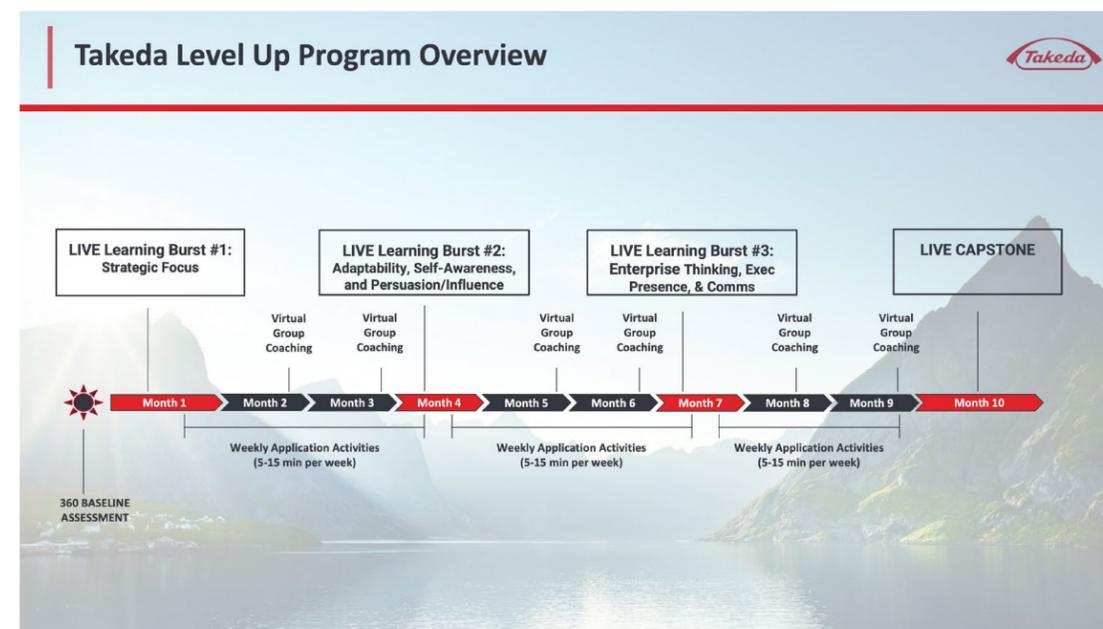
For a best-in-class example, I connected with one of our favorite clients at LEADx — the field leader development team (FLD) at Takeda Pharmaceuticals. Scott Tinkel, Director, FLD, and Craig Neverosky, Associate Director, FLD just concluded their year-long program for first-line sales leaders, called Level Up.

Pillar 2: Design Your Learning Journey Based on Your Core Competencies

Takeda worked with us at LEADx to create a ten-month developmental program covering the following core competencies:

1. Strategic Focus
2. Adaptability, Self-Awareness, and Persuasion/Influence
3. Enterprise-Thinking, Executive Presence, and Communications

The program leverages a combination of live learning bursts, monthly group coaching sessions, and weekly micro-learning activities to drive retention and enable real-time application of new skills.



Overview of Takeda’s Level Up Program

Pillar 3: Deliver In-Person, Experiential Learning Bursts

The FLD Team was intentional with creating a learning eco-system with three Learning Bursts and the Capstone session that would drive engagement, increase retention, and expand thinking. Each Learning Burst delivered an intensive, application-focused workshop component that focused on the capability being highlighted. Another critical component behind the Learning Burst days is learning from others (Social Learning). This includes peer-to-peer learning, best practice sharing, and networking. At each learning burst, a Takeda senior leader would be a guest presenter to share business context, their own career

and development journey, and real-life examples of the highlighted capability in action. The FLD Team also included regular networking events with Takeda leaders as part of the learning bursts.

“I was incredibly impressed with the level of conversation that the participants were having in this strategic focus session,” Tinkel said, referencing the workshop for Strategic Focus. And Tinkel was still impressed by participants’ transformation months later. “The level of conversation three months after our workshop on strategic focus blew me away,” he added.

As an example of a live learning burst, here is a breakdown of the Strategic Focus day and what it entailed:

1. **Strategic Mindset Self-assessment** — Sales leaders each took a quick self-assessment to help them reflect on their strategic mindset and establish a baseline for their abilities, strengths, and areas for improvement.
2. **Introduction to Strategic Focus** — The facilitator laid the foundation around what strategic focus is and why it's important.
3. **Video + Large Group Debrief** — 4 Ways to Improve Your Strategic Thinking.
4. **Knowing Your Industry Group Exercise** — Groups prepared and presented strategic summaries.
5. **Critical Inquiry and Asking Strategic Questions** — The focus then shifted to asking strategic questions. Participants received a questions worksheet to use on the job.
6. **A Senior Business Leader at Takeda Presented on Strategic Thinking** — This helped bring the concepts to life at Takeda. In response, sales leaders formulated and asked strategic questions.
7. **Strategic Communication** — Lastly, participants learned what strategic communication is, learned how to communicate strategically, and then practiced in small groups.

Pillar 4: Let the 3-to-1 Model Guide Your Pull-Through

So many otherwise great programs fail at the same juncture: The knowing-doing gap. Even after a highly engaging workshop, participants get busy. They forget to apply what they learned for a week. Then two weeks. Before you know it, the vast majority of learning becomes “throwaway training.”

LEADx's 3-to-1 model helps interrupt this problem to make learning stick. The 3-to-1 model says that for each skill learned, you should design and deliver at least three follow-through activities or on-the-job exercises. For example, if you are training effective feedback your “curriculum” would become an action learning journey like:

- **Week 1:** Live workshop to learn and practice an effective feedback framework. For example, a facilitator could teach the B.I.G. model of feedback (Behavior, Impact, Get Agreement).
- **Week 2:** Participants would ask their team members to give them feedback (supporting materials could include model emails, discussion guides, a job aid on how to receive feedback)
- **Week 3:** Participants would give their team members feedback — but only positive feedback.
- **Week 4:** Participants would give constructive feedback as appropriate. If they see something, they'll say something.

The 3-to-1 model became Takeda's guiding principle for each skill trained. For example, after the Adaptability workshop in May, leaders would cover core skills like adaptability, self-awareness, and persuasion at a monthly cadence. Each month would replicate the 3-to-1 model, capped with a virtual group coaching session.

Pillar 5: Deploy Tech to Reach Busy Managers in the Flow of Work

Essential to making the 3-to-1 model work for this busy sales leader audience is the thoughtful use of technology. Takeda leveraged the LEADx platform which included three important components.

First, AI-powered, personalized nudges drove learner engagement. Nudges are quick prompts that draw on behavioral science to engage learners and incite practice. Each leader received a weekly cadence of hyper-personalized nudges. Based on the topics they were learning, the nudges would reinforce key insights, get leaders to practice, and facilitate on-the-job application.

Second, the FLD Team ensured sales leaders had additional access to expert coaches by running monthly group coaching sessions. Delivered virtually, one-hour group coaching sessions brought the cohort of leaders together to reinforce key concepts, share experiences, ask questions, work through challenges, and practice together. These monthly checkpoints also helped keep leaders on track with their practice.

Finally, they allowed participants to have daily access to an expert coach through an online platform called LiveCoach. With LiveCoach, sales leaders could send messages to an ICF-certified coach at any time. This enabled participants to ask questions, get support, and even role-play challenging scenarios at exactly the moment they needed it.

The Results: Measurable Improvement in Leadership Performance

By the end of the program, 83% of leaders already showed significant improvement in leadership performance. The Net Promoter Score of Level Up was 88 for participants and 100 for participants' managers. Qualitative feedback from supervisors indicates improvement in self-awareness, confidence, strategic thinking, communication skills, and more. Here are a few examples of feedback participants received from their supervisors after the program:

"[Tia's] **goal attainment is leading the nation** and her team is ranked #1 for the yearly sales award. I believe her strategic approach post-training and having the skill to align her team on a few key priorities is contributing to her team's success."

"I've observed [Sonia] taking a **more expensive approach to collaboration across the area**, notably in her collaboration with other sales managers to introduce coaching sessions for sales representatives. Additionally, she has significantly enhanced her communication with her team..."

"Through the Level Up program, I have observed [Sanjay's] **confidence increase** in the way he leads peers in group discussions, small group interactions, and 1:1 interactions. He has a better understanding of his capabilities and how to leverage his broader enterprise perspective to support and challenge others in their coaching efforts."

Sample feedback from participants' supervisors.

When it comes to using tech for pull-through, the average participant received 127 personalized nudges by email, opened the behavior change platform 32 times, and engaged with 10 lessons.

The Takeaway: Tech Democratizes Your Ability to Drive Behavior Change

As technology improves, you can see a clear shift in leadership development. By combining thoughtful measurement, in-person training, and digital follow-through, you can create a high-touch, in-depth

program—one that mimics the executive-level approach of weekly one-on-one coaching. And you can do so in a way that scales to first-line leaders. ■

The Future Of Leadership Training: Aligned, Connected, Application-Focused



Brandon Clark, Global Head of Talent Development, Adobe

Leadership and managerial effectiveness have always been critical business topics, however, since the onset of the pandemic, managers everywhere have taken on even greater importance. The Gallup 2023 State of the Global Workplace poll found that 44 percent of workers are experiencing “a lot of stress” which matches the high levels found in 2021. Research by UKG indicates that managers impact employees' mental health even more than doctors or therapists. Add to this the prominence of hybrid work environments, and the leadership requirements of managers are clearly more complex than ever before.

Recognizing the pivotal role people managers play in employee engagement and mental well-being, Adobe — with a mission to change the world through digital experiences — set out to reimagine leadership training with a program they call the Adobe Leader Experience (ALE).

Training That Is Aligned And Connected

In designing ALE, Adobe's primary focus was on creating connected experiences. According to Brandon Clark, Global Head of Talent Development, Adobe, “We're being very thoughtful about how to create journeys where we place employees in the center, rather than executing siloed programs from our different functional areas. Working this way helps our Employee Experience team create a more frictionless experience.”

Adobe applied this philosophy to ALE by linking it closely with their quarterly Check-in conversations. “Check-in” has been Adobe's approach to performance management for over a decade. It replaces the awkward annual rating discussions with two-way conversations that provide Adobe employees with the clarity they need to be successful in their roles and to support career growth. Each quarter of ALE is tied to a specific theme:

- Q1: Goals That Raise the Bar: Managers learn how to help their teams create stretchy and outcome-focused goals.
- Q2: Giving Genuine Feedback: Managers acquire the skills to provide genuine feedback, offer actionable guidance, and manage all levels of employee performance.
- Q3: Creating Conditions for Success: Managers get practical guidance to understand Adobe Employee Survey feedback and act by committing to one focus area in Check-in.
- Q4: Rewarding & Recognizing Performance: Managers learn how to reward employees based on their contributions and give actionable feedback for improvement.

Traditional approaches to manager training take a one-and-done boot camp approach, addressing a large toolbox of competencies and behaviors. Rarely has this approach been successful. As Clark explained, “From what I've seen, it's common in our industry to train managers at some given point in the year or when they join the company, and then they hope and pray that they're able to use that information later. But the managers don't have a place to practice, they don't have a place to apply their learnings. And so they store it away and then inevitably forget what they learned.”

The tight alignment between quarterly training and quarterly Check-in conversations at Adobe allows people managers to immediately apply what they learn, thereby closing the “Knowing-Doing Gap” between education and application.

Training Designed For Scale And Impact

While others would be tempted to simply mass distribute a single video or eLearning module, Adobe achieved scale while still offering a high-touch high-impact program. “Any given quarter we hold somewhere in the realm of 30 to 40 sessions that people can join, and it's always kicked off by a senior leader,” explained Clark. Each session is 75 minutes long, which is the optimal length to maximize satisfaction (as measured by a Net Promoter Score methodology). “We also believe in leaders teaching other leaders, so we utilize breakout rooms to allow for two-way conversation and feedback.”

Furthermore, Adobe has segmented the sessions based on the managerial hierarchy—directors, VPs, and frontline managers. This ensures that the content is tailored to the unique challenges faced by each group, while also creating a psychologically safe environment for managers at similar levels to share insights and best practices.

High Participation, High Quality

So, has it worked? Over 80% of Adobe people managers are attending the quarterly sessions, which is a very high attendance rate. Adobe saw an immediate effect. Overall people leader confidence has increased by over 10%, there has been a boost in the number of quarterly Check-in conversations completed and documented, and the quality of written feedback from managers has gone up by 40% since the program's inception. Quality results were quantified through a rigorous process of grading a representative sample of Check-in feedback on a quality rubric.

The beauty of Adobe's program is its simplicity and immediacy. Managers don't just learn; they

immediately practice what they've learned, thereby making the program extremely effective. ALE also serves as a testament to how a well-thought-out, integrated approach to leadership training can deliver measurable results.

"We also believe in leaders teaching other leaders, so we utilize breakout rooms to allow for two-way conversation and feedback."

The Takeaway

Adobe's commitment to addressing the complexities and stresses of managerial roles in today's fast-paced corporate environment is not just a win for Adobe but also sets a precedent for other companies. After all, as the program shows, when you invest in your people managers, the dividends are paid back multifold—through improved performance, higher employee engagement, and a healthier workplace overall. ■

Why Chaos Might Be The Missing Piece In Your Company Culture



Helen Russell, Chief People Officer of Rivian

"We use our values as verbs. 'Zoom out,' 'ask why,' and 'stay open' are values."

The best company cultures act like magnets, repelling people as effectively as they attract people. Often, these same cultures operate from highly original core values. The type of values that are unique enough to have a polarizing effect. For example, the company Veeva emphasizes the importance of speed. At 10x Genomics, management actively tells candidates, "10x is a really intense place to work. We move really quickly, we work really hard, and we do that because for every moment we lose, there are lives lost as we pursue our ambitious mission."

In this interview with Helen Russell, the Chief People Officer of Rivian, Russell emphasized "chaos" as an integral part of Rivian culture, calling it a necessary piece for a highly innovative culture.

Rivian has three electric vehicles on the market: their commercial electric delivery vehicle (Amazon's delivery truck), the R1T (truck), and the R1S (sport utility vehicle, SUV). Rivian has grown from 1,000 employees in 2020 to 16,000 employees today.

Values as Verbs Drive Rivian Culture

As Russell remarked, "The best cultures can put people off in as meaningful a way as they can attract people."

Russell's description of Rivian's culture fits the bill: "Humble, first-principled, collaborative, humanistic, and chaotic." She explained her meaning of chaotic saying, "I think when you've had our level of growth, you're in a very innovative environment, and there's a level of organized chaos that underlies all of that innovation."

Russell also pointed out that Rivian employees enact company values in a way that she has never experienced at previous companies. "At previous companies, we had our core values printed on our badges, mouse mats, posters, and the backs of bathroom stall doors. We have none of that here. Our values are our vocabulary. We use our values as verbs. 'Zoom out,' 'ask why,' and 'stay open' are values, and I can't tell you how many times during meetings that somebody will introduce an idea with, 'Stay open while I talk you through this' or 'Can we just zoom out and make sure that we solve for this at the Rivian level?'"

Rivian Sustains Its Culture by Hiring for It and Weaving It Into Onboarding

There's no one-size-fits-all way to sustain company culture. Often, the best strategies for sustaining culture are those that are unique to a company's culture. At Rivian, the following key strategies are employed to foster culture:

1. *Get incredibly intentional with hiring and onboarding* — Culture begins with hiring. Russell said, "I know that sounds obvious, but every hire that we make needs to enhance the culture, to improve our teams." Russell then weaves culture into onboarding. She goes to new-hire onboarding orientation every Monday to talk about culture.
2. *Monthly meetings between the CEO and new hires* — The CEO of Rivian, RJ Scaringe, meets with new hires every month. They call the session "Zoom Out with RJ." He doesn't talk about products, strategy, or objectives. He talks about culture.
3. *Quarterly recharge meetings* — "We call these meetings Recharge Meetings because you're supposed to feel recharged after having them, not miserable or depressed," Russell said. "We focus on the 'how' elements of culture—How you're living our culture—and less on the 'what' areas where you can make modifications."

Trends in Engagement Data Direct Russell Toward Areas to Go Deeper

Russell runs big engagement surveys twice per year and looks for clear, actionable trends in the data. For example, she described an interesting recent trend: "When we examined wellbeing and belonging, they were the two largest correlators. If you answered positively to, 'I feel like Rivian cares about my wellbeing,' and you answered positively to, 'I feel like this is a place where I belong,' you had a 35% lift in your engagement." This trend made it easy for Russell to know which areas to pursue more deeply to maximize her impact on engagement.

Russell's Most-Valued Behaviors at Rivian: Receiving Feedback and Humility

The heart of any culture is a collection of behaviors. The behaviors that you set out to change dictate your culture. The two behaviors that Russell most wants her employees to develop now are receiving feedback and humility.

Receiving feedback — Russell said, "I feel like we have spent 20 years figuring out how to make your manager better and more equipped at giving feedback. We've never focused on how to make your employee more equipped at receiving that feedback. And I think in a world where we are all incredible at asking for and receiving feedback, the notion of giving feedback would be very, very different. You think about those conversations that you dread and those that you don't mind. The difference between a feedback conversation that you dread and one that you don't mind is how you anticipate your message will be received. It's not your ability to do it; it's how that message will be received."

Humility — "To be humble allows you to be open, collaborative, and curious and to zoom out. In other words, enacting our culture requires you to leave your ego at the door," Russell said.

Russell's Learning Recommendation for HR Professionals: "Schools Kill Creativity"

All of the chief people officers I have interviewed are voracious readers and learners. Asked what books or talks she would recommend for human resources (HR) pros, Russell recommended the Ted Talk, "Schools Kill Creativity" by Sir Ken Robinson.

Russell stated, "I would recommend an old Ted Talk from 2006 called 'Schools Kill Creativity.' It talks about how creativity is all about original ideas that add value. Sir Ken Robinson discusses how our education system stifles the way we think. I would say that our corporate culture can stifle the way that we work too. So how do we think about fostering creativity, bringing your skills, and leaving your experiences at the door so that you can bring this real, first-principle way of thinking to work every day?" ■

How To Design & Deliver A Digital Program For First-Line Leaders



Mike Kennedy, SVP of Leadership Development at IPG Mediabrands

First-level leaders hold direct responsibility for the majority of a company’s employees as well as its day-to-day interactions with clients. Harvard Business School professor Linda Hill writes in her book *Becoming a Manager*, “Managers on the front line are critical to sustaining quality, service, innovation, and financial performance.” When it comes to developing this keystone group of leaders, times are changing fast. Gone are the days of one-and-done programs and boot-camp-style courses. In their place, a much more digital, flexible, and sticky style of development is on the rise.

Mike Kennedy, the SVP of Leadership Development at IPG Mediabrands, offers a master class example of this new approach. Kennedy came on board as head of leadership development in early 2022. With 500–600 new managers entering frontline leadership in the U.S. each year, he and his learning team set out to design and deliver a development program devoted to this audience.

Kennedy and team strove to address three key needs:

1. To shift away from classroom-only programs and toward something digital.
2. To establish a curriculum of topics and skills specific to first-line leadership.
3. To pull learning through using multiple touchpoints for each topic.

Here’s a breakdown of how IPG Mediabrands teamed up with LEADx to meet each of these needs.

Need #1: A Digital Solution.

Kennedy knew he needed a digital leadership development program. He knew a digital program would better fit busy managers’ schedules. Also, in-person programs were being phased out as the pandemic had highlighted their flaws and made them less practical.

That said, he didn’t want the program to be entirely self-driven and interaction-less (as many digital solutions are). He and the team wanted it to be:

- Cohort-based for peer learning, support, and networking.
- A prescribed coaching plan where leaders work through critical topics at a predetermined pace.
- Expert-driven, where leaders learn from and work with expert coaches.

SOLUTION #1: ROLL OUT A DIGITAL PLATFORM + MONTHLY GROUP COACHING.

Their approach was built firmly around a cohort-based, prescriptive learner journey. In four months, the cohort went through four core modules broken into ten subtopics.

Each topic covered included a tailored path through the digital platform followed by a live group coaching session.

Kennedy described his decision to design the program this way, saying, “In the past, I have led two-day, in-person boot camps, but delivering a program that way is a matter of expediency, not sound learning practice. You push the cognitive load envelope, and you don’t take advantage of tactics like spaced repetition and retrieval practice.”

To take a more sound learning approach, the learning team worked with LEADx to design a program that would leverage a digital platform for reinforcement and spaced learning. Over the course of a week, leaders engage with and practice the subject matter at least four times in bite-size chunks that fit naturally into the flow of work. Here are some of the main ways this approach helped reinforce learning for these first-line leaders to change behavior and build positive habits:

- *Microlearning*: Deliver the essential learning in a short, digestible video clip.
- *Nudges*: Start sending out a trickle of behavioral nudges. These are personalized and focus on quick, actionable tips. They are NOT pesky reminders.
- *Reflection activity*: A fillable form guides leaders to think deeply about their natural approach to feedback.
- *Job aid + practice*: Leaders are equipped with a job aid and begin to practice feedback.
- *Group coaching session*: The cohort comes together to talk shop, practice, and learn directly from an expert.
- *Ongoing*: Leaders could message directly with an expert coach on an as-needed basis. This way, leaders get immediate support when they inevitably run into challenges when applying what they have learned. They can ask detailed Qs, get advice, and run through role plays.

By putting together a digital program in this way, the learning team was able to keep the program cohort-based, prescriptive, and expert-driven.

Need #2: A Curriculum of Skills Specific to First-Line Leaders.

When Kennedy first came on board to head up leadership development, the existing leadership development was “level agnostic,” or one-size-fits-all. “I saw a lot of disparity in the levels of content. Some courses were clearly intended for more senior audiences, like ‘Creating a Vision,’ and others were clearly for more junior audiences,” Kennedy explained.

To create something specific to this audience of new managers, Kennedy and team went back to the drawing board.

SOLUTION #2: DESIGN FOUR CRITICAL MODULES AND DELIVER THEM AT A PACE THAT FITS BUSY LEADERS’ SCHEDULES.

The first thing they did was gather data from prospective participants, HR business partners, and the supervisors of these first-line leaders. Soon, they had a sense of:

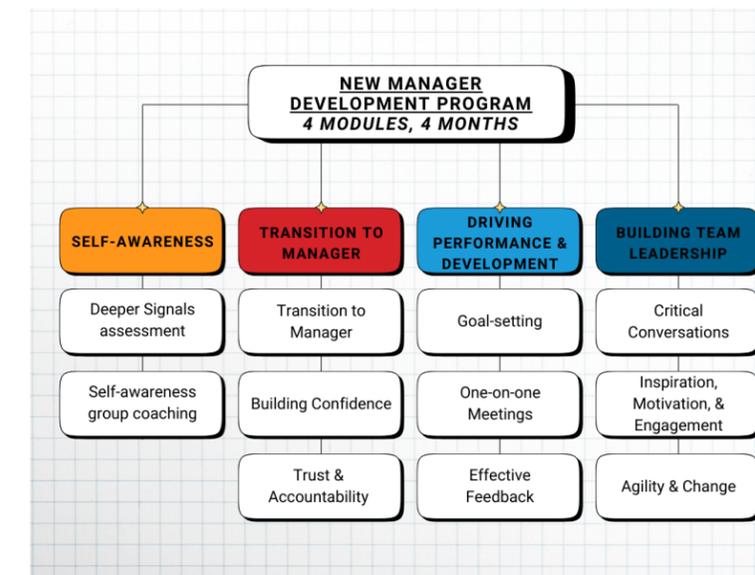
- Areas where new managers felt unprepared
- Disconnect areas between new managers and their supervisors
- Essential skills for successful first-line leadership at IPG Mediabrands

Equipped with this knowledge, Kennedy established a curriculum of topics that are critical to effective frontline management. High level, the program would cover:

- Self-awareness
- Transition to manager
- Driving performance and development
- Building team leadership

Each of these four modules would include subtopics for a total of 10 critical topics.

In terms of cadence, they found that a four-month sprint worked best (pictured in the previous section). It struck the right balance between sound learning practice and the urgency of new managers’ schedules.



Breakdown of the four modules and ten subtopics.

Need #3: Make Learning Stick (Without Overwhelming Busy Leaders).

When it came to learning reinforcement, Kennedy knew he had to strike a delicate balance with this audience. On the one hand, he needed to greatly increase the number of touchpoints and longevity of learning to make it stick (one-and-done classes were insufficient). On the other hand, his new managers had urgent schedules. Too much additional work would overload and overwhelm them.

SOLUTION #3: PULL LEARNING THROUGH WITH AI-POWERED, PERSONALIZED NUDGES.

Essential to reaching these busy leaders in the flow of work were AI-powered, personalized nudges. Based on behavioral science and learning theory, the LEADx nudges are designed to engage leaders and trigger them to practice and apply what they learned.

Participants received three main types of nudges per week throughout the four-month program:

1. *Coaching plan nudge:* A one-sentence nudge that delivers an activity, exercise, or reflection. This helped keep leaders on track with their coaching plans and practice.
2. *Personality nudge:* Since new managers completed the Deeper Signals Core Drivers personality assessment, Kennedy leveraged nudges that were personalized to each leader's assessment results. Specific tips and suggestions helped drive home core insights.
3. *Supervisor nudge:* The supervisors of each new manager also received nudges based on the results of that manager's personality assessment. The nudges focus on how to best lead that person according to their personality.

One of the most common fears around nudges is that they will begin to feel like "nags" or "pesky reminders." Kennedy addressed this concern, saying, "Previously, I was afraid to roll out nudges. I was worried people might take the suggestions personally or find them annoying. What I hear from people now is that the nudges are very welcome. The tips help reorient them to critical actions and habits, and they can feel it helping."

AI-driven personalization of nudges helped make them feel less annoying and more helpful. Kennedy said, "The personalization of the nudges is terrific. It advances awareness both personally and with direct reports. I got one this morning that said: Remember, when you give feedback to [Sarah], she's going to perceive it this way. [Sarah] perceives feedback the opposite of how I do, so it would have been easy for me to overlook without a nudge."

The Early Results: High Learner Engagement

As the first wave of new managers finishes the program, the early results indicate a highly engaging and useful program:

- 98% of participants activated the digital platform
- 78% earned a digital Credly badge (completed 6+ digital coaching plans and attended at least 1 group coaching session)
- 76% attendance at group coaching sessions

Self-reported improvement and satisfaction are high, and qualitative feedback confirms that the digital program is addressing manager needs. Examples include:

- "The one-on-one topic was practical and helpful. It gave me language to use and questions to ask in my one-on-ones."
- "The microlearning videos with interviews provided on-the-ground tips from real life."
- "Getting us together in groups was extremely helpful to think through examples."

By shifting the focus from in-person events to an ongoing system of learning in the flow of work, Kennedy and team were able to effectively engage first-line leaders and help them build positive habits around critical skills. ■

This is Micki, Director of Leadership Development.



She needs to launch a new leadership series for first-time managers. They'll cover topics like **GROW Coaching, Effective One-On-Ones, Psychological Safety, & Trust.**

But, she keeps running into the same two problems:

1. **People are too busy for long workshops**
2. **Online learning falls dead flat**

Micki was at her wit's end until she found LEADx.

With LEADx, she built her own bundle of new manager skills and delivered them via micro-learning, personalized nudges, and group coaching.

Usage jumped over 90% and new behaviors STUCK.

BOOK A DEMO



LEADx

Daniel Goleman's Five Ingredients For Emotional Intelligence Training

by Kevin Kruse

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is difficult to train. As Annie McKee writes for the Harvard Business Review, “EQ is difficult to develop because it is linked to psychological development and neurological pathways created over an entire lifetime. It takes a lot of effort to change long-standing habits of human interaction.”

The good news is that companies have been training EQ for decades. And the research shows not only *that* EQ training is effective, but also *how* to make it effective. As EQ expert, Dr. Daniel Goleman explained in our recent interview, “A host of strong studies were done...If a training program is well designed and implemented effectively, adults can increase their EQ and maintain those increases as time goes on.”

In the chapter of *Optimal* entitled “EQ Training That Works,” Goleman shares a range of powerful studies:

- Medical residents saw *patient satisfaction* increase after EQ training.
- Pharmaceutical reps who received EQ training outperformed those who didn't in *sales revenue*.
- Midlevel managers saw improved *job satisfaction*, *decreased stress*, and *improved general health* after EQ training.

But simply offering EQ training isn't enough. You need to approach training in a way that helps your learners change their behavior. To do so, Goleman recommends five key ingredients.



The Five Ingredients of Successful EQ Training

After decades of studying the most successful EQ training programs, Goleman observed five critical ingredients:

- 1. Highly motivated participants.** The best EQ training programs actively increase and sustain engagement throughout the program. One example Goleman offers is of a program that employed weekly email nudges to increase and extend engagement. Each week, participants received two emails. The emails encouraged learners to practice a specific part of the course.
- 2. Ten or more hours of training, spaced out over time, with periodic booster sessions.** “The more hours of training, the better,” Goleman writes. By spreading training hours out over time, you can help make learning stick.
- 3. Ongoing practice and reinforcement.** Goleman points out that EQ is a behavioral skill. This means, that like basketball or golf, practice is the key to mastery. The more you practice, the more EQ will become engrained in your day-to-day approach.
- 4. Social support.** For executives and high-level leaders, Goleman recommends one-on-one coaching. As you scale, he recommends employing regular cohort-based meetings. These meetings serve as an opportunity to talk about on-the-job learning. At my company LEADx, for example, we create a space for social support with monthly group coaching sessions. We also use a text-based platform where leaders can message directly with an expert EQ coach. This enables leaders to ask questions, role play challenging scenarios, and seek out advice.
- 5. Active modeling and support of key organizational leaders.** The more top executives engage with and actively support EQ training, the more employees will value it. Goleman shares an example where an EQ coach delivers the same session at two different companies. The session is much more effective at one company than the other. The main difference? At one company, the CEO kicked off the session then left. At the other, the CEO kicked off the session then actively participated in it until the very end. The second training program, of course, was the effective one.

“Not all training programs need to be alike, and not all need to incorporate every one of the five ingredients,” Goleman writes, “But the more ingredients they do incorporate, the more likely it is that they will work.”

Examples of Successful EQ Training

There is no one “right” way to train EQ. To inspire you, here are a few examples Goleman shares. Each is unique. All are successful.

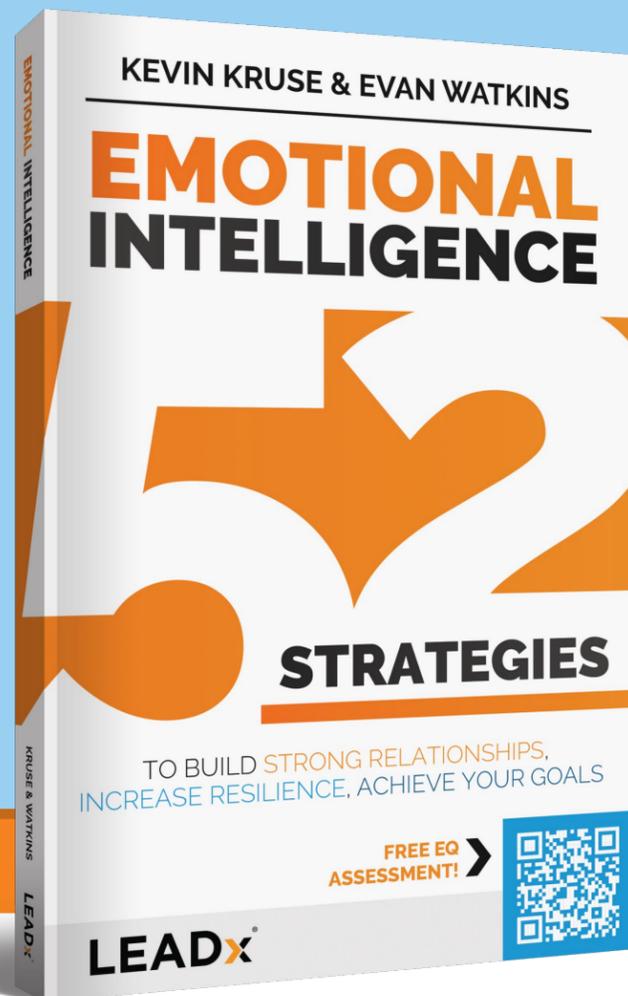
- 1. The “ideal self” approach at Case Western.** Researcher Richard Boyatzis teaches EQ at Case Western’s MBA program. The program kicks off by asking participants what their “ideal self” would look like in five years. Then, participants take a 360 EQ assessment to get a strong sense of their strengths and areas for improvement. After that, participants connect the results of their 360 assessment to their ideal self. How can their strengths help them reach that ideal? How about areas for improvement? Finally, participants practice. Boyatzis has seen his students show exceptional emotional intelligence, even seven years after this program.
- 2. Learning circles for leaders.** A group of leaders in Chicago (pulled from a variety of businesses) met on a monthly basis. Each month, one person shared their biggest current challenge. After the presentation, other leaders were invited to share similar experiences. Then, other leaders were asked to offer advice. After two years, leaders showed significant improvements in EQ.
- 3. Sessions by EQ competency.** In a third example, Goleman broke training down into multiple sessions, one for each EQ competency. Participants learned about that competency and then were given daily exercises to practice. A meta-analysis (a study looking at many relevant studies) of Goleman’s approach shows that it works. It has helped improve EQ for a variety of audiences—from MBA students to managers, executives, and even cricket players.

The Takeaway: To Improve EQ, You Have to Build Habits

The key ingredients of “successful EQ training” all share something in common: They help participants practice. Practice is what makes learning stick. Practice is what it takes to shed yourself of a low EQ habit and replace it with a high EQ habit. So as you create or outsource your EQ training, ask yourself one question: “How will this help my learners practice?” ■

WHAT IF YOU COULD TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE AND CAREER IN LESS THAN A YEAR?

Unlock The Power Of EQ In Weeks



This book will teach you how to

- Discover your strengths and weaknesses with a free EQ assessment
- Stay calm under pressure by monitoring and managing moods and emotions
- Influence and persuade with your understanding of others
- Build strong relationships through empathy
- Resolve conflict easily with collaboration and negotiation strategies
- Improve decision-making by uncovering biases
- Be a strong leader who motivates others and fosters teamwork

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How To Choose Participants For Your Emerging Leader Program

by Kevin Kruse

Let's start with a real story of how *not* to choose participants for your emerging leader program. This pharmaceutical company had such a bad selection process that you can use it as a map of the mistakes you should avoid.

For context, this company has 1,000 sales reps and 100 sales managers. Here's what the sales leader development team did:

1. They asked each sales manager to nominate one high-potential sales rep.
2. They whittled those 100 selections down to 12 nominees.
3. They hired an outside talent selection I/O psychologist.
4. The psychologist designed a rigorous, four-month selection process.
5. Candidates took personality assessments, went through interviews, completed assignments, and finished by preparing and presenting projects to a panel.
6. Then, after all that, the leadership development team selected eight of those 12 sales reps.
7. Four sales reps returned to their jobs, unable to participate (and probably pretty peeved).

Here's the biggest problem with this approach: It's too selective. This poor leadership development team spent a huge chunk of their budget to weed out and disengage 88 of their top performers. Then, they demanded a significant amount of time and energy from four of their absolute best sales reps (we're talking top 1%), only to tell them that they weren't quite good enough. Yikes.

Quantity: How Do You Decide How Many Emerging Leaders to Select?

I recommend that you think about this number in terms of two main categories of emerging leaders:

- 1. Top talent to engage and retain.** In the Pharma example, there's a good chance that the eight leaders they chose went on to become great leaders. But, what about the 92 top sales reps they turned away? I cringe to think that they disengaged such a big portion of the top 10% of sales reps. Ideally, you want to engage and retain as large a percentage of that population as possible. Your emerging leader program is a great way to do so. Instead, this company poured hundreds of thousands of dollars into selecting and training only eight people. If retention is a key goal, expand your pool.
- 2. Leaders to promote (replace manager attrition).** Eight people does not cover this company's average manager attrition rate of 20%. As managers leave or are promoted, about 20 seats will open up each year. At a bare minimum, you want 20 emerging leaders to choose from. Some will likely not be ready, and that's okay because you don't necessarily want *all* of your leaders to come up internally.

Generally speaking, both of the goals above point to the same solution: Broaden your pool. Even if many of your emerging leaders don't siphon up into manager positions, development will help engage and retain them. In fact, emerging leadership development programs often help managers realize that they *do not* want to take a leadership role. And that is incredibly valuable.

Three Ways to Choose Your Participants

Here are three effective ways to consider handling your selection process:

- 1. Have managers select, but don't eliminate selections.** Odds are, managers have a good grasp on who performs well and who would do well as a manager. Instead of weeding through their 100 selections to choose 12, take all 100 and develop them.

- 2. Have employees self-select.** If you want some checks and balances in place, you might ask your managers to confirm that those employees are a good fit for the emerging leader program and are at a good time in the year to handle the extra workload. But I've seen this work well with zero checks and balances.
- 3. Select the top 10% or more of talent.** Another way to select is to just take the top 10% of talent. No nominations, no weeding. Though, of course, there's the whole debate about "what exactly makes a top 10% performer."

All of these methods have something in common: They all seek to let more people in. Instead of spending your budget on selection, spend it on development. Imagine what the first pharma company could have done with all the money they spent weeding people out. They probably could have at least added the leaders they paid to eliminate (ironic!).

Regardless of your method, stay aware of how selection may interfere with diversity and equitable opportunity. Managers often carry biases. And, when team members know they weren't selected by their manager, they can disengage. For these reasons, I tend to highly recommend self-selection.

Struggling to Choose One of the Above? Split Your Emerging Leader Program into Two Audiences

If you're struggling to choose one of the above selection methods, it's likely for the following reason (which I hear all the time):

"I want to have a big, equitable program that will develop anyone interested, but I also want a narrow 'feeder' program that pushes a select group of emerging leaders into management."

There's actually a simple, highly effective solution here: Split your audience. Do both.

At Ferring Pharmaceuticals, the Director of Commercial Leadership Development, Rob Daniel, did exactly this. He split emerging leaders into two main groups:

- 1. Self-selected individual contributors:** For the first program, Daniel allowed any sales rep to self-select. The program was six months long and focused on self-leadership topics like self-awareness, growth mindset, and emotional intelligence. This program helped Daniel's team see who was interested in progressing and who was taking leadership development seriously.
- 2. High-potential emerging leaders:** This group of emerging leaders is already on track for a leadership position. They have a formalized individual development plan, have had serious conversations about becoming a leader, and have expressed a desire to lead people. This was a smaller audience (though still big enough to fill in for attrition). This program is a 12-month deep dive into leadership skills. It focuses on job shadowing and experiential learning. The goal of this program is to set emerging leaders up to thrive once they get promoted.

By building the program in this way, Daniel had his cake and ate it too. He engaged all talented sales reps while still getting selective as people progressed through the pipeline.

The number one objection to this style of program is price. But, Daniel actually ran both of these programs for less than the price of the failed emerging leader program at the beginning of this article. To do so, he leveraged self-driven learning, a behavior change platform, and group coaching. This made for a high-touch, expert-driven program that was still very cheap relative to the industry standard.

How to Evaluate and Select Your Candidates (If Not Self-Selected)

If you aren't doing self-selection, then you need to determine your selection and evaluation criteria.

Important things to consider include:

- Minimum tenure
- Minimum performance (and how to measure this)
- Essay questions (do you have them, and what are they?)
- Manager recommendation (beware of disengagement from those not selected)
- Live interview (how do you do this, and who conducts it?)
- Diversity (how do you ensure diversity and minimize bias?)
- Selection committee (who will be on it?)

Here's a sample checklist:

SELECTION CRITERIA
(To be completed by nominating manager)

Check to confirm that each statement is met by the applicant.

- The candidate shows commitment to our company values and care for our company, our customers, our patients, and colleagues.
- The candidate has been in role for 24 months or more by December 31, 2024.
- The candidate has fulfilled all performance obligations and exceeded performance goals in the last 24 months.
- The candidate is in good standing with the company, including completion of all required training programs and certifications.
- The candidate has shown initiative outside their immediate job responsibilities (eg, coaching others, volunteering on a committee, taking on a special project) over the past 24 months.
- The candidate is committed to completing a 12 month training program, which may include attending virtual and live events, and completing multiple self-study assignments and projects.



Emerging Leader Program Application

Sample set of selection criteria. Each checkbox could have its own set of criteria.

At Olympus, for example, their emerging leader program used a selection committee to choose 20 participants from 40 applicants. With 80 first-line leaders across the organization, the target audience size would easily fill in for attrition. Olympus's application process included a variety of criteria, such as:

- Modeling Olympus values.
- High performance: Set by each business unit, based on the 9-box model.
- DE&I.
- Diversity in geography.
- Sales results.
- Achievements (e.g., field trainer responsibilities, national impact, and elite/quota performance).
- A letter of recommendation from your manager. A panel then reviewed and rated each essay.
- An essay assignment based on leadership competencies.
- A panel interview of each candidate's manager.

Promote Your Program Internally: A Story-Based Approach

Regardless of how big or small your audience is, you need to promote your program. If it's open enrollment, you want to draw as many people as possible. And if it's application-based, you want it to be as competitive as possible. Here are five guideposts to market your program.

1. **Make your audience the "hero" of your messaging.** Show them what they have to gain by going through your program. Don't get caught up in all the details, topics, and assessments that you personally geek out on. Focus on emerging leader success stories.
2. **Bring up the challenges your emerging leaders will face and how your program will help them rise above those challenges.** For example, you might point out how tough it can be to transition from being great at sales to being great at leading a sales team, or how it can be difficult to know whether or not you want to lead people.

3. **Present your program as the answer to their challenge.** Show how your program will help solve their challenge and guide them through it. Now is when you can geek out a bit and talk about how different topics and activities will help them overcome those challenges. For example, "By shadowing our best current manager, you will see first-hand what it takes to succeed as a manager."
4. **Show your audience what they might lose by not joining your program.** For example, you might point out that they may never know whether they want to take on a leadership role. Or, they may never be considered for the role.
5. **Be clear and concise.** Make it easy for people to understand what they have to gain from your program.

Be sure to include testimonials if your program is already up and running. A great testimonial from an alumni may even touch on all of the above points.

Putting It All Together: When In Doubt, Expand Your Pool

Selection is daunting. But it's worth being intentional about your process. Your audience is your program. My sweeping advice: If you're unsure, expand your pool. You'll regret passing up a potentially great leader more than you'll regret developing a high-performer who never progresses into a leadership position. ■

LEADx specializes in working with companies to design and deliver world-class emerging leader programs. Set up a call to learn more.



The Culture Code Podcast

Curious how your most innovative peers scale and sustain a high-performance culture? This question has been a passion of ours for decades now, so we put together a podcast devoted to answering it. We interview cutting-edge CPOs, CHROs, and CLOs to unearth the secrets behind their success.

Here are three of our favorite episodes so far:

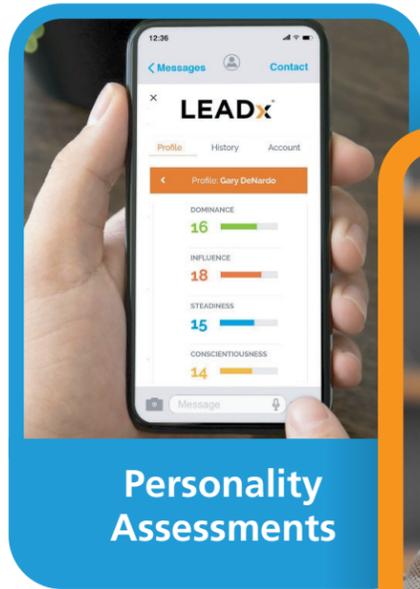
- **The Unique Way that Pinterest's CPO Scales and Sustains Culture**
- **The Importance of Increasing Your Talent Density with the CPO of Zapier**
- **Why Chaos Might Be the Missing Piece in Your Company Culture with the CPO of Rivian**

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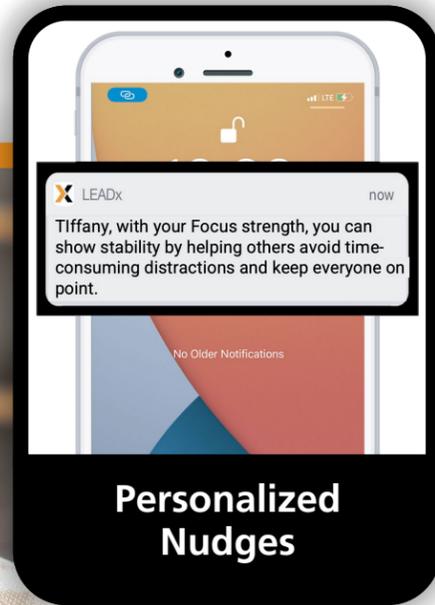
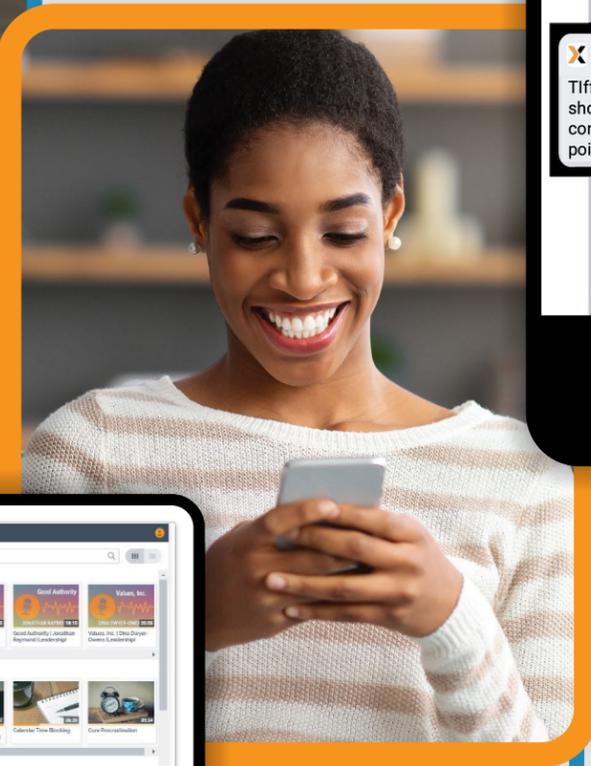
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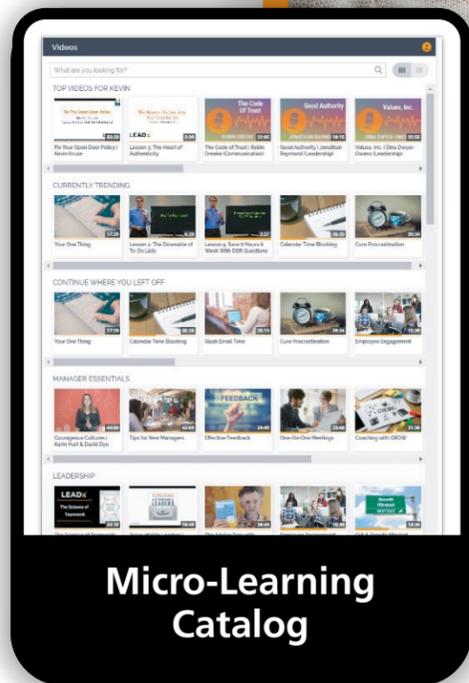
Give it a listen



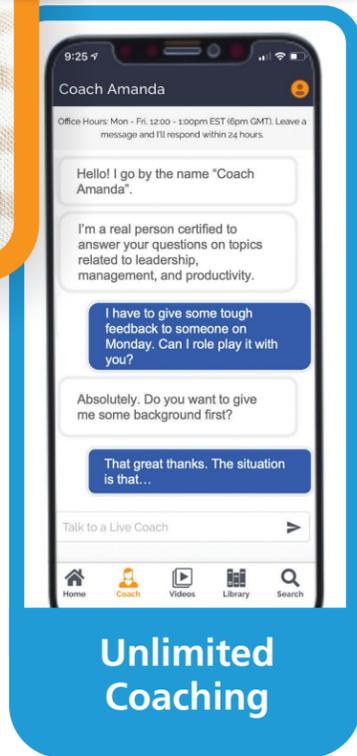
Personality Assessments



Personalized Nudges



Micro-Learning Catalog



Unlimited Coaching

Scale culture one behavior at a time with:

- AI-powered, behavioral nudges
- World-class virtual training
- Micro-learning in the flow of work



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THE OFFICIAL LEADx COURSE CATALOG

Here are 56 LEADx courses broken down into four categories:

- Leading Yourself
- Leading Others
- Leading An Organization
- Self-Awareness

- Self-paced in-the-flow-of-work learning (4 activity and 12 activity learning paths are available).
- 50 to 90-minute live group coaching sessions. Use LEADx facilitator or license a train-the-trainer kit.

Leading Yourself

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

MICROLEARNING

Accountability

Accountability is a critical leadership skill that promotes ownership, trust, performance, collaboration, learning, and motivation. By creating a culture of accountability, teams can work together more effectively and achieve their goals successfully.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How taking accountability helps to achieve goals.
- Develop good team accountability practices.
- Discuss the importance of accountability with team members.

- Read the book summary, *The Wisdom of Oz* by Roger Connors.
- Take the Accountability assessment.
- Discuss the challenges and rewards of accepting accountability with your team.
- Reflect on your experience.

Active Listening

Active listening allows leaders to gain a deeper understanding of their team's needs, concerns, and ideas. When leaders listen actively, they can better comprehend the underlying motivations and perspectives of their team members, which can help them to make more informed decisions.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- Ways to improve body language and make eye contact.
- How to strengthen active listening skills.
- How to create a listening culture.

- Complete the *Active Listening* course with Dr. Naphtali Hoff.
- Are you an Active Listener? Take the self-assessment.
- Apply your Active Listening skills.
- Reflect on your experience.

Agility

Agility and adaptability are critical for leaders who operate in fast-paced, dynamic, or uncertain environments, as they can help them stay ahead of the curve and navigate complex challenges with confidence. Leaders who are agile and adaptable can adjust their strategies, priorities, and actions in real-time to stay aligned with their objectives and keep their teams focused and motivated.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to apply agility to projects or decisions.
- How to talk with their team about agility and adaptability.
- How to build a culture of experimentation.

- Read the book summary, *Strategic Doing*
- Practice "ideation" skills on a problem or decision.
- Listen for inflexible mindset triggers.
- Reflect on your mindset.

Communication Fundamentals

Effective communication skills are paramount for a leader in any organization, serving as a cornerstone for successful leadership. They enable leaders to articulate their vision clearly and persuasively, inspiring and motivating their team towards achieving organizational goals.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- What type of communication mindset they have.
- How to hold effective one-on-one meetings.
- How to communicate in a way that drives employee engagement higher.

- Watch the video *Communication for Employee Engagement*.
- Talk to your team about communication.
- Hold one-on-one meetings with your team.
- Reflect on your experience.

Communication: Verbal Minimizers

Minimizing language can make a leader appear less confident, less sure of themselves, and less certain about their message. It can also make it difficult for others to take them seriously and may create confusion or misunderstanding.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to quiet self-doubt.
- To pay attention to when they are using minimizing language.
- How to create reminders to not use minimizing language.

- Read the book summary *Playing Big* by Tara Mohr.
- How are you minimizing your language? Take the Self-Assessment.
- This week, before each meeting, resolve to use powerful verbal language.
- Reflect on your experience.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

MICROLEARNING

Confidence Building

Self-confidence is critical to leadership because it enables leaders to make decisions, take risks, set goals, handle challenges, and inspire others. Without self-confidence, leaders may struggle to lead effectively and make a positive impact on their team or organization.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to stop negative self-talk.
- Developmental activities to build confidence.
- Habits to develop that build confidence.

- Watch *The Skill of Self-Confidence* TEDx Talk.
- Take the assessment to find out if you have Impostor Syndrome.
- Practice behaviors that take confidence and courage.
- Reflect on your experience.

Customer Focused

Being customer focused is crucial for leaders because it helps them understand the needs and preferences of their target audience, which is essential for developing products, services, and strategies that meet their expectations. By prioritizing the customer experience, leaders can build a loyal customer base and increase their revenue and profitability.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to identify areas for improvement.
- How to create a customer-focused culture.
- How to make and keep your customers satisfied.

- Customer focused self-reflection.
- Read the book summary, *The Customer-Centered Enterprise*.
- Research what your internal or external customers really want.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Valuing diversity is important for leaders because it brings a range of perspectives, experiences, and ideas to the table. A diverse team can foster creativity and innovation, as well as help identify blind spots and biases that may exist.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- To explore how different aspects of social identity can provide both obstacles and benefits.
- To improve their use of inclusive terms.
- To become aware of unconscious bias.

- Listen to the podcast episode *Confront Your Biases*.
- Complete the "Privilege Self-Reflection" assessment.
- Focus on unconscious bias in your communication, especially your use of pronouns.
- Reflect on your experience.

Growth Mindset

A growth mindset is important for a leader because it allows them to embrace challenges, learn from failures, and develop new skills and abilities. A growth mindset is the belief that one's abilities and intelligence can be developed through hard work, dedication, and perseverance.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- The difference between a "growth" mindset and a "fixed" mindset.
- How to develop a growth mindset.
- Activities to build a growth mindset.

- Read the book summary *Mindset* by Carol Dweck.
- Do you have a growth mindset? Take the self-assessment.
- Apply your growth mindset.
- Reflect on your experience.

Influence Without Authority

Influence without authority is an important skill for leaders because it allows them to achieve their goals and objectives by working effectively with others, even in situations where they may not have direct control or authority.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to effectively build relationships, identify what people actually want, and make effective mutual trades.
- What style of influence they have.
- Activities to become stronger in influence and persuasion.

- Read the book summary *Influence without Authority*.
- What's your influence style? Take the self-assessment.
- This week, apply your Influencing without Authority skills.
- Reflect on your experience.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

MICROLEARNING

Personal Branding

Building a personal brand is crucial for leaders because it helps establish their reputation, values, and expertise in the minds of their audience, whether it's employees, customers, or investors. By consistently conveying their unique message and vision, leaders can differentiate themselves from their competitors and create a loyal following.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to define their personal brand.
- How to identify strengths and skills.
- How to use unique qualities to stand out.

- Read the book summary, *Crushing It!*
- Watch the video, *Stand Out* with Dorie Clark
- Explore blockers to building your personal brand.

Productivity

Increasing productivity is a valuable leadership skill that can benefit both the leader and their team. Learning to prioritize tasks and focusing on what matters most can lead to better decision-making and problem-solving.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How their personality impacts productivity.
- How to block MIT time.
- How to better manage their email inbox.

- Read the book summary, *The One Thing*.
- Watch the video, *Minimize Reactive Attention*.
- Watch the Course, *Minimize Meetings*.

Resilience

Resilience is crucial for leadership development as leaders are often faced with challenging situations and unexpected setbacks that require them to bounce back quickly and maintain their focus and determination.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- Their current level of resilience.
- Habits to build resilience.
- Five key drivers of resilience.

- Take the Resilience assessment, read report.
- Watch the *Habits of Resilient Leaders* video from Mayo Clinic.
- Strengthen one resilience driver this week.
- Reflect on your experience.

Results Focused

Being results-focused is an important aspect of leadership because it helps you to stay focused, motivated, and productive, and it enables you to deliver the desired outcomes for your team and organization.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to remove distractions in order to focus on goals.
- Behaviors for aligning team members' skills to tasks required to achieve objectives.
- How to talk to team members about being results focused.

- Read the book summary *The 4 Disciplines of Execution* by Chris McChesney.
- Are you results focused? Take the self-assessment.
- Talk to your team, or manager, about staying focused on results.
- Reflect on your experience.

Risk Taking

Risk taking is an essential component of leadership as it encourages leaders to step out of their comfort zones, challenge the status quo, and embrace new ideas and opportunities. Effective leaders must be able to assess risks and make informed decisions, often in the face of uncertainty and ambiguity.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to step outside their comfort zone.
- How to become more comfortable with uncertainty and taking risks.
- Ways to build risk-taking skills.

- Watch Dr. Tina Seelig's TED Talk: *Little Risks*
- Read the book summary: *Thinking in Bets* by Annie Duke.
- Complete the Risk List.
- Flex your risk taking skills.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

MICROLEARNING

SMART Goals for Yourself

SMART goals provide clarity and specificity to the goals leaders set for themselves and their teams. This helps leaders focus their attention on achieving what matters most, while avoiding distractions and unproductive activities.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to stay focused and achieve their objectives.
- Areas for improvement in goal setting processes.
- How to track progress when working on goals.

- Read the article, *Overview to SMART Goals*.
- Take the assessment to find out how effective you are at goal setting.
- Put your knowledge into practice. Set one SMART Goal for yourself.
- Reflect on your experience.

Women in Leadership: Confidence Building

Confidence is crucial for women leaders, particularly in environments often dominated by male leadership, as it reinforces their credibility and competence. This also helps to challenge and gradually shift deep-seated gender norms, paving the way for a more inclusive and balanced leadership environment.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- If they suffer from Imposter Syndrome and how to stop it.
- If they are risk avoidant.
- How to take more risks and avoid people-pleasing.

- Reading the book summary *The Confidence Code*.
- Taking the confidence quiz.
- Completing the Risk List worksheet.

Women in Leadership: Networking

By cultivating relationships across different levels and areas of their organizations, women leaders can gain a broader perspective and make more informed decisions. Ultimately, building and leveraging relationships is critical for women leaders to build their influence, advance their careers, and create positive change in their organizations and communities.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to improve their networking skills.
- Why networking is important.
- Steps to expand their network.

- Listening to the podcast, *Networking Made Simple and Easy*.
- Read the book summary, *Taking the Work Out of Networking*.
- Complete the Pay It Back worksheet.

Women in Leadership: Personal Brand

Making their work visible is important for women leaders because research has shown that women often face systemic biases and stereotypes that can lead to their contributions being overlooked or undervalued. Ultimately, making their work visible is critical for women leaders to create a positive impact and achieve their full potential in their roles.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to break bad habits that keep women from moving up in their careers.
- Create their Elevator Story.
- Ways to highlight their achievements.

- Read the book summary, *How Women Rise*.
- Create a Top 50 list of contacts.
- Complete the Elevator Story worksheet.

Women In Leadership: Powerful Presence

Research has shown that women are often subject to gender stereotypes that can lead to them being perceived as less authoritative or competent than their male counterparts. By cultivating a powerful presence, women leaders can overcome these biases and establish themselves as credible and effective leaders.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How power posing can boost your confidence.
- How to stop using diminishing body language.
- How to use powerful verbal language.

- Read the book summary, *Playing Big*.
- Complete the Minimizing Language self-reflection.
- Watch the webinar, *5 Star Communication Secrets*

Leading Others

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

MICROLEARNING

Accountability for Teams

As a leader, one of the most critical responsibilities is to ensure that team members are accountable for their actions and decisions. Accountability is the foundation of trust and teamwork, and it is essential for achieving organizational goals. Leaders must set clear expectations, establish performance metrics, and provide regular feedback to team members.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- The tools and tips of supportive accountability.
- Good team accountability practices.
- To routinely discuss the importance of accountability with team members.

- Read the book summary *Supportive Accountability* by Sylvia Melena.
- How strong is your accountability process with your team? Take the assessment.
- Discuss the challenges and rewards of accepting accountability with your team.
- Reflect on your experience.

Autonomy

Autonomy is important for teams because it empowers them to be more creative, flexible, and innovative. It encourages collaboration and ownership, which can lead to better performance and job satisfaction.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- The 80% rule for delegation.
- Strategies to empower your team to work autonomously.
- How to create a culture of autonomy.

- Watch the video, *Autonomy*.
- Take the assessment to determine if you effectively empower others to work autonomously.
- Practice developing effective habits to foster a culture of autonomy.
- Reflect on your experience.

Behavioral Interviewing

Behavioral interviewing can help employers make more informed hiring decisions and reduce the risk of hiring the wrong candidate. By assessing a candidate's past behavior and performance, employers can gain insights into how they might perform in the role and whether they would be a good fit for the organization's culture and values.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to conduct an objective behavioral interview.
- To evaluate job candidates based on data and skills.
- How to use topgrading practices for hiring, training and promoting.

- Watch the Behavioral Interviewing & Selection video course.
- Read the book summary, *Topgrading*, by Dr. Bradford Smart.
- Recruit colleagues or friends to complete 3 practice interviews.
- Reflect on your experience.

Care

Showing your team members that you care is crucial as a leader because it helps to build strong relationships with your team and fosters a sense of trust and loyalty. When team members feel that their leader genuinely cares about their well-being, they are more likely to feel valued and respected, which in turn can lead to increased job satisfaction and motivation.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- Habits that invite social connections and show support.
- Strategies that show their team members they care and are interested in them.

- Watch the video, *Care*.
- Take the assessment to find out how well you show your team you care about them.
- Practice developing habits that show your care and interest in others.
- Reflect on your experience.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

MICROLEARNING

Career Development

Investing in the career development of team members is not only beneficial for the individuals themselves, but also for the team and organization as a whole. It can lead to improved job satisfaction, increased loyalty and commitment, enhanced performance, and better succession planning.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- To develop and implement career development practices for their team members.
- To identify high-potential future leaders.
- To hold conversations with their team members about career development.

- Watch the video, *Career*.
- Take the self-assessment to explore how you drive your team members' career development.
- Practice developing habits to support your team members' career goals.
- Reflect on your experience.

Change Management

In today's rapidly evolving global market, organizations must be able to adapt and respond quickly to changing circumstances to remain competitive and relevant. Leaders who can effectively lead change are better equipped to guide their teams and organizations through periods of uncertainty and transition.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to apply the "8 accelerators" to drive change.
- How to improve skills in the areas of agility, ambiguity, and change.
- How to influence and motivate others to embrace a change journey in a positive and productive manner.

- Watch the video *8 Steps to Drive Change*.
- What are your beliefs about change? Take the self-assessment.
- Apply the 8-Step Kotter model to a key initiative.
- Reflect on your experience.

Communication: Teams

Two-way communication is a critical leadership skill that allows leaders to build trust and establish strong relationships with their team members. In a two-way communication process, leaders not only convey information, but they also listen actively to their team members' feedback, concerns, and ideas.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to encourage information sharing.
- Strategies to communicate effectively.
- Ways to strengthen communication skills.

- Watch the video, *Two-way Communication*.
- Take the Self-Assessment to find out how you practice two-way communication.
- Practice developing habits to communicate effectively with others.
- Reflect on your experience.

Critical Conversations

Effective communication is a cornerstone of good leadership, and being able to have difficult conversations is an important aspect of effective communication. By knowing how to have these conversations effectively, leaders can address issues in a constructive and productive manner.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- To express their ideas and opinions and make other people feel safe enough to freely share their ideas and opinions.
- To effectively navigate critical conversations.
- The framework to have healthy, productive conversations.

- Read the book summary, *Crucial Conversations*.
- Reflect on a critical conversation you've had in the past.
- Use the Critical Conversations Job Aid to strengthen your communication skills.
- Reflect on your experience.

	LEARNING OBJECTIVES	MICROLEARNING
<p>Delegation</p> <p>Delegation is an essential skill for leaders who want to maximize their productivity, increase efficiency, achieve greater success for their organization, and build a stronger, more capable team.</p>	<p>By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To delegate using the PACE model. To identify areas for improvement. Tips for delegating effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the <i>How to Delegate Effectively</i> course. Take the assessment to find out how well you delegate. Practice "Effective Delegation." Reflect on your experience.
<p>Effective Feedback</p> <p>Giving and receiving feedback is a critical component of leadership development, and it is essential for building high-performing teams. Effective feedback can provide valuable insights into individual and team performance, and it can help identify areas for improvement and growth.</p>	<p>By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tips for giving effective feedback. How to use the B.I.G. model to give effective feedback. How to avoid common feedback mistakes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the <i>Effective Feedback</i> video course. What is your natural feedback style? Complete self-reflection. Practice giving both positive and constructive feedback. Reflect on your experience.
<p>Employee Engagement</p> <p>Employee engagement is critical for leaders to ensure the success of their organization. Engaged employees are more productive, committed, innovative, and customer focused. They also contribute to a positive and productive organizational culture.</p>	<p>By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The four drivers of employee engagement. How to inspire, motivate, and engage team members. Tips on how to boost employee engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the <i>Employee Engagement</i> video course. How well do you engage your team members? Take the self-assessment to find out. Choose 3 reminder strategies to consistently boost your team members' engagement. Reflect on your experience.
<p>Future Vision</p> <p>Future vision is an essential component of leadership because it provides a roadmap for the organization's future growth and success. A clear and compelling future vision helps leaders to align their teams around a common purpose, focus their efforts on achieving strategic objectives, and anticipate and prepare for changes and challenges.</p>	<p>By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to develop visionary leadership habits. Strategies to effectively share a future vision that motivates others. Ways to become a better visionary leader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch the video, <i>Future Vision</i>. How do you share a future vision to inspire others? Take the self-assessment. Practice developing habits for visionary leadership with your team. Reflect on your experience.
<p>GROW Coaching</p> <p>Coaching is a powerful tool for developing individuals and teams, and it is essential for building a high-performing organization. GROW coaching is a popular coaching framework that is used by many successful organizations to facilitate personal and professional growth.</p>	<p>By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GROW model of coaching. Tips on coaching from top executive coaches. How to use effective questioning and active listening techniques in coaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the <i>Coaching with G.R.O.W.</i> video course Take the Coaching Mindset Self-Reflection Quiz. Start GROW Coaching your team. Reflect on your experience.

	LEARNING OBJECTIVES	MICROLEARNING
<p>Meeting Efficiency</p> <p>Meeting effectiveness is essential for achieving organizational goals, enhancing collaboration, and driving productivity. Effective meetings save time for everyone involved and improve decision-making by providing a platform for discussion, debate, and the exchange of ideas.</p>	<p>By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key strategies to having effective meetings. How to use a meeting checklist to keep meetings on track. Tips for creating inclusive meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the book summary <i>The Surprising Science of Meetings</i>. Watch the webinar <i>Extraordinary Meetings</i> by Paul Axtell. Get ready for your next meeting with a meeting preparation checklist. Increase inclusivity with these tips for creating inclusive meetings.
<p>One-on-One Meetings</p> <p>One-on-one meetings are an essential tool for building effective relationships and communication between leaders and their team members. These meetings provide an opportunity for leaders to offer feedback, guidance, and support, as well as establish accountability and foster engagement.</p>	<p>By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tips for effective one-on-one meetings. How your personality can affect your approach to one-on-one meetings. How to follow a proper one-on-one meeting agenda. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the <i>One-on-One Meetings (O3s)</i> course. Take the assessment to find out how your personality affects your one-on-one meetings behavior. Hold one-on-one meetings with your direct reports, following a proper agenda. Reflect on your experience.
<p>Psychological Safety</p> <p>Psychological safety is a critical aspect of a healthy organizational culture. When employees feel psychologically safe, they are more likely to take risks, speak up about concerns or problems, and share innovative ideas.</p>	<p>By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to create a culture of learning, growth and innovation. How to create and maintain a psychologically safe work environment for your team. Questions to ask your team to foster a culture of psychological safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch the webinar, <i>The Fearless Organization</i>, with Dr. Amy Edmondson. Take the self-assessment to find out your psychological safety skill level. Practice psychological safety habit builders with your team. Reflect on your experience.
<p>Recognition</p> <p>Recognition is a vital component of employee engagement because it helps to create a sense of value and appreciation among employees. When employees feel recognized for their hard work, they are more likely to feel motivated and engaged in their work.</p>	<p>By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to show recognition to team members. More about team members' recognition and appreciation preferences. To develop the habit of looking for opportunities to show and provide recognition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch the video, <i>Recognition for Employee Engagement</i>. Do you know how your team members prefer to be recognized? How do you show your appreciation for others? Reflect on your experience.
<p>Relationship Building</p> <p>Networking is a vital component of leadership development, as it enables leaders to build relationships and establish connections with individuals and organizations that can support their goals. Effective networking can help leaders gain access to new ideas, resources, and opportunities, as well as insights into industry trends and best practices.</p>	<p>By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to network more effectively. How to build and strengthen relationships on digital platforms. Tips for networking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to podcast, <i>Networking Made simple</i>. Leadership self-reflection. Networking activities.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

MICROLEARNING

Remote Teams

Leading remote teams is an important skill for leaders to have in today's global, connected world. Leaders who can communicate effectively, build trust, leverage technology, be flexible, and culturally sensitive can help their remote teams succeed and thrive.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:
- The six best practices for managing remote teams.
 - What the 3 agreements are and why they are important.
 - How to improve meeting efficiency.

- Watch *Managing Remote Teams*.
- Establish 3 agreements (hours, timing, notice) to keep your team connected.
- Revisit and discuss your weekly team meeting.
- Reflect on your experience.

SMART Goals for Teams

SMART goals provide a clear and structured framework for setting goals in an organization, which can help ensure that objectives are well-defined, achievable, and aligned with the organization's larger mission and strategy. This can help increase accountability, motivation, and focus among team members, and ultimately lead to more effective and efficient goal attainment.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:
- The elements of SMART goals.
 - How to use a SMART Goals worksheet to define objectives.
 - Ways to improve their approach to supporting team members' goals.

- Read the article, *Overview to SMART Goals*.
- Take the assessment to find out how well you support your team members with goal setting.
- Set SMART Goals with each of your team members.
- Reflect on your experience.

Team Building

Overall, setting clear goals, defining roles and responsibilities, and establishing norms can help teams work more effectively together. When everyone is aligned around a common purpose, understands their individual contributions, and knows how to interact with one another, teams can achieve their goals and accomplish great things.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:
- How and why they should be building superteams.
 - To strengthen their teams by examining goals, roles and norms.
 - To apply developmental activities to further strengthen their teams.

- Read the book summary, *Team of Teams*, by General Stanley McChrystal.
- Take the Team Self-Assessment.
- Hold a team-building activity.
- Reflect on your experience.

Transition to Manager

Becoming a manager for the first time can be an exciting opportunity to lead and guide a team towards achieving shared goals, but it also comes with new responsibilities and expectations. This course is designed to equip new managers with the tools and strategies needed to navigate common challenges that arise in a management role.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:
- How to avoid common first-time manager mistakes.
 - Tips for first-time managers.
 - How to delegate effectively.

- Complete the *First Time Manager Fundamentals* course.
- Take the delegation IQ assessment.
- Practice "Effective Delegation."
- Reflect on your experience.

Trust

Building trust is essential for effective leadership. When leaders create a healthy and productive work environment and team members trust their leader, they are more likely to feel engaged, committed, and motivated to do their best work.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:
- To build trust with the 4 C's.
 - To strengthen their transparency and authenticity behaviors.
 - How to build trust by using the 5 "waves" of trust.

- Read the book summary, *The Speed of Trust*, by Stephen M.R. Covey.
- Take the 4 C's of Trust Self-Assessment.
- Commit to 3 actions to build trust intentionally this week.
- Reflect on your experience.

LEADx

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Unlock Your Leaders' Self-Awareness with DISC

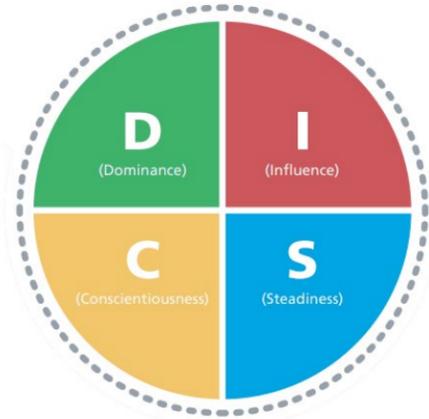
Assess your leaders' styles, then turn insights into action.

✓ Send personalized nudges based on your learners' DISC results

✓ Reinforce learning with micro-learning exercises.

✓ Deliver elite coaching: One-on-one, group, and live, real-time messaging.

📖 Knowledge → 🛠 Practice → 🔄 Habits



"I thought it was GREAT! I love the ability to watch videos (or listen to videos- I'm a podcast gal) and explore the content. I liked the push reminders and the idea of using the DISC profiling for me and to better understand my team."

District Manager at Syneos Health

Book a demo with LEADx to learn more!



Leading an Organization

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

MICROLEARNING

Decision Making

Effective leadership requires both decision-making and critical thinking skills. Leaders who are able to make sound decisions and think critically are better able to navigate complex challenges, anticipate potential obstacles, and lead their teams to success. These skills allow leaders to evaluate options, make informed choices, and adjust course as needed to achieve their goals.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- To identify factors that prevent good decision-making.
- To utilize a decision journal to facilitate making sound judgements.
- To move through a strategic process with confidence.

- Read the book summary, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, by Daniel Kahneman.
- Take the Decision-Making assessment.
- Read the article, "How to Use a Decision Journal."
- Reflect on your experience.

Innovation

Innovation and creativity are essential for leadership because they allow leaders to envision new possibilities, identify opportunities, and create value in the face of uncertainty and change. By fostering a culture of innovation, leaders can empower their teams to think creatively, experiment with new ideas, and take calculated risks. This approach can help organizations stay ahead of the competition, adapt to changing market conditions, and drive long-term growth.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- How to use the SCAMPER method of brainstorming.
- To assess their Innovation & Creativity skills.
- How to get their team involved in brainstorming.

- Read the article, *SCAMPER Your Way to Innovation & Creativity*.
- Take Innovation & Creativity self-assessment.
- Plan a show & tell meeting.
- Reflect on your experience.

Strategic Mindset

Having a strategic mindset is an important skill for a leader because it allows them to think beyond the present and plan for the future. A leader who thinks strategically can effectively navigate complex and uncertain situations, adapt to changing circumstances, and position the organization for long-term success.

By the end of this coaching plan, participants will learn:

- To identify areas for improvement.
- Ways to improve their strategic thinking skills.

- Watch the *4 Ways to Improve Strategic Thinking* video.
- Take the Strategic Mindset self-assessment.
- Make time to apply strategic vision skills.
- Reflect on your experience.

Self-Awareness

16-Type Assessment

A 16-type personality assessment is a tool designed to categorize individuals into one of 16 distinct personality types based on how they perceive the world and make decisions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will:
- Learn about their personality and how they relate to others.
 - Explore the four dichotomies of the 16-type personality assessment.
 - Understand when their personality is seen as a strength.

MICROLEARNING

- Take the assessment to discover your 16-type personality profile.
- Watch the “16-Type Personality” video course.
- Read how your 16-type personality impacts your success.
- Reflect on your experience.

Big 5 O.C.E.A.N.

The Big Five personality traits, also known as the Five-Factor Model, is a widely accepted model for assessing personality. It consists of five main dimensions: openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will:
- Explore their personality and how they relate to others.
 - How to modulate their extraversion trait.
 - Understand how aspects of their personality can be helpful or detrimental.

- Take the assessment to discover your Big 5 personality profile.
- Read pages 8-10 of Big 5 Personality Report.
- Focus on your extraversion trait to maximize team communication.
- Reflect on your experience.

CliftonStrengths

The CliftonStrengths assessment is a tool designed to identify an individual's unique strengths and talents. The assessment helps individuals discover their natural talents and how they can be applied to various aspects of their lives, such as career development, leadership, and personal growth.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will:
- Learn an overview of CliftonStrengths.
 - Explore how their theme has been a strength.
 - Learn how to use their strengths to help with work priorities.

- Watch the CliftonStrengths overview and your top 5 strengths overview videos.
- How has your top strength helped you be successful in the past?
- This week, use your top 5 strengths to help with current work priorities.
- Reflect on your experience.

DISC

The DISC profile is a behavioral assessment tool that involves a series of questions that help individuals identify their preferred style and how it may influence their interactions with others. The DISC profile can be useful in various settings, such as team building, conflict resolution, and leadership development.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will:
- Explore their DISC style.
 - Understand how and when their DISC style has been a strength.
 - Learn how to work better with other team members.

- Take the assessment to discover your DISC behavioral profile.
- When has your dominant DISC style helped you be successful in the past?
- Use DISC to maximize your communication with a team member.
- Reflect on your experience.

EQ-i 2.0

EQ-i, or emotional intelligence quotient, can be highly valuable for leaders because it allows them to better understand and manage their own emotions, as well as those of their team members. By improving their EQ-i, leaders can enhance their ability to communicate effectively, build strong relationships, and inspire their team.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will:
- Determine if they are flexible or impulsive.
 - Learn how emotions impact decisions.
 - Learn how to convey emotions without hurting others.

- Get feedback on strengths and weaknesses.
- Complete worksheets that explore emotions, empathy and self-awareness.
- Explore impulse control.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is important for leaders because it allows them to understand and manage their own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. EQ also enables leaders to handle conflict and stress in a constructive manner, and to make informed decisions that take into account the impact on their team and stakeholders.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will:
- Learn to recognize their own emotions and the emotions of people around them.
 - Explore their self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management.
 - Learn ways to develop their emotional intelligence.

MICROLEARNING

- Complete the *Emotional Intelligence* (EQ) course.
- Take your organization's preferred EQ assessment or use the free EQ quiz.
- Focus on one of the four EQ components this week.
- Reflect on your experience.

Insights Discovery

Insights Discovery is a personal development tool that can benefit someone by providing insights into their unique personality and preferences, as well as those of others. By understanding their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as how they relate to others, individuals can develop more effective communication and collaboration skills.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will:
- Learn how to improve their relationship with a peer.
 - Learn how to improve their relationship with their manager.
 - Learn how to improve their decision-making process.

- Using your Insights style to communicate effectively.
- Reflect on when your Insights style has helped you to be successful.
- Reflect on the impact of your Insights style on others.

Leadership Challenge: Leadership Practice Inventory

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) is a powerful personal development tool that can benefit leaders in a number of ways. It provides leaders with a clear picture of their strengths and areas for improvement in five key leadership practices: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will:
- Learn how to create a clear, compelling vision.
 - Learn what is strategic recognition and why it matters.
 - Learn how to challenge the status quo.

- Reflect on a core value; discuss with team members.
- Read the book summary, *The Vision Driven Leader*.
- Watch the video, Recognition for Employee Engagement.

Leadership Circle Profile

The Leadership Circle Profile™ (LCP) 360 provides a detailed snapshot in time, enabling leaders to answer the question: “How are my behaviors and mindset enabling or constraining my intended leadership impact and our business performance?” By measuring a leader’s Creative Competencies and Reactive Tendencies, the LCP explores underlying beliefs and assumptions—the habits of thought that run much of our behavior. As leaders gain these insights, they have much higher leverage to make transformative change.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will:
- Learn the key behaviors and internal assumptions that lead to high fulfillment, high achievement leadership.
 - Explore the eighteen Leadership Competencies.
 - Explore the eleven Reactive Tendencies.

- Review LCP assessment and interpretation manual.
- Activities that focus on behaviors to improve dimensions.

Social Styles

Social Styles refers to an individual's preferred way of interacting with others, and includes four main styles: analytical, driving, amiable, and expressive. By understanding the social styles of their team members, a leader can tailor their communication style to better resonate with each individual.

- By the end of this coaching plan, participants will:
- Explore how their Social Style has been a strength.
 - Learn how to recognize the Social Styles of others.
 - Learn how to work with different Social Styles.

- When has your dominant Social Style helped you to be successful in the past?
- Decode the Social Style of colleagues or customers.
- Maximize your communication with a team member.
- Reflect on your experience.



Drive Behavior Change with Nudges

LEADx now
Coaching Tip, Jenny! A powerful phrase in the "Options" step of GROW is "And what else?" This AWE question leads to more ideas.

Micro-Action

MONDAY

GROW Coaching

LEADx now
This week, learn how your personality affects your Feedback Style. Tap for worksheet.

Micro-Action

WEDNESDAY

Effective Feedback

LEADx now
Jenny, Safiya on your team has the "S" DISC style. Spend time building rapport. Ask her about her family, friends, or interests.

DISC

Direct Report's Personality

Safiya Karsan, Lucas Carlson, Jada Williams

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—Kim Zimmerman,
Leadership Development Manager at Inspire Brands

