

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Rationale and Synopsis of Leadership Development Proposal

Our proposal approach is to lay out a set of principles, skills and assumptions critical to our understanding of leadership development. If this is confirmed, the details of budget, time and logistics will be provided. But, first, it is important to share our vision and rationale of such an extensive process and how it differs from most other executive LDP programs. It is a very personal and challenging approach. There are variations on this theme that can accommodate your financial and time realities. But, what is outlined below is what we believe will achieve the results you desire.

Thus, we have taken your task to develop a top of the line LDP for senior officers very seriously. While, for thirty-five years, our business has been conducting a wide variety of Leadership Development Programs, I have related the content of this proposal directly to my assessment of the needs of upper echelon leaders in higher education. This is based on my thirteen years of involvement at Penn and the past fifteen years working within no fewer than twenty colleges and universities, including Cornell, Wellesley College and, recently, the University of Virginia and the University of Wisconsin.

Perhaps, most important, I'm going to address the compelling tough question. *Why, given the considerable expenditure of dollars and time for similar courses, has there not been more significant, observable evidence of the value of such training among your leaders? Why have these leaders not reflected the skills that were suppose to be delivered?* I believe we know the answers and how to address them.

Integrating Theory and Experience into Practice

In a rapidly evolving world and work place, change is the daily common denominator. Virtually all of the following content information implies change. Change management is not a separate learning module. In fact, it demands all of the skills that will be shared. And more. Our first ten learning segments, prepare the change agent to initiate and manage change, whether with an individual, with the team or within the context of the larger organization. There is no simple formula or equation. Rather, it demands the ability to work with those involved in change – the collective – and, then, to diagnose, design, problem solve, build trust, and create a climate that supports risk. Of course, it demands that leaders, as change agents, know themselves well, understand the value of their strengths, and, equally, how they may get in their own way.

Such training cannot be accomplished piecemeal. It reflects an intense process of integrated learning that merges the participants' increasing knowledge of the fundamentals of change within the individual leader, the team or the system. If you want to see the new behaviors so often desired and talked about in such advanced training, then, it demands the time to learn, practice and model them. There are no short cuts.

WHY Leadership Development Efforts Often FAIL

The reasons are methodological, systemic and personal in nature. This proposal addresses each of these limitations and your critical question relating to results.

1. **Individuals arrive at the training with widely differing levels of motivation.** It is our view that, based on a rigorous screening, participants need to be elected to enroll in the course. Selection should be recognized as an honor much more than an expectation, requirement, remediation or, perhaps, “who you know”. In theory, there should be many eyes watching each leader’s performance during and after the training process, since it essentially, represents a career opportunity toward increasing responsibility.
2. **Knowledge and information are provided intellectually or didactically, often including the over-use of Powerpoint, overheads, and lectures.** Our approach is based on the systematic integration of *theory, research, applied methods* and *strategies*. When such high level education is conducted *experientially* with new skills in real situations, then, retention and motivation are proven to increase.
3. **In most such training, there is no champion /advocate at the top of the organization in support of the training. In fact, higher-level leaders are often threatened by returning participants who, armed with new skills and ideas may threaten the status quo and the very competence of these leaders.** The result is that fresh ideas and learning can go underground in a climate that does not support innovation and change. Even worse, new skills and knowledge can bring to light existing dysfunction, not a good idea in a risk averse and traditional organization.
4. **The building of deep respect, trust and care among the participants themselves does not occur.** This can reduce the quality of their dialogue, their ability to conflict and the willingness to provide each other with essential feedback. Without such meaningful relationships, participant understanding of their impact as leaders will not be gained, jeopardizing the value of one critical aspect of their training that can determine the success of the entire experience.
5. **While such programs are costly in terms of dollars and time spent, participants are rarely accountable for using the tangible skills, knowledge and strategies resulting from the training. This is partly because of limited institutional performance management practices at this level, as well as the lack of any expectations or consequences for participants on their return.** The consistent use of new skills across the participant leaders can, over time, have a significant impact on the organizational culture — one reason for such training. But these skills and methods must be built into the collective with an institutional commitment to support such leadership education.
6. **The demand of participants to practice /apply their new skills between sessions in the form of homework is rarely rigorous.** Without rather immediate practice, lessons and new skills are easily lost. Like physicians - “see one, do one, teach one”. Again, this suggests the need for champions supporting the use of these new skills and institutional commitment (#1 and #5) supported by essential feedback (#4) to assess efficacy of such new practices.
7. **Such programs are often on-site.** The benefits of off-site locations significantly offset the increased logistical cost by:
 - dramatically improving participant focus
 - providing a sense of importance and institutional support of the program
 - increasing the ability to engage in complex intellectual, physical and emotional tasks not often replicable in most on- site venues

- extending the time available and intensity possible for various initiatives by nearly a third
- capitalizing upon the creative ways participants can engage each other during periods of down time

Building such camaraderie can influence the long-term impact of the program both individually and organizationally with follow-up and accountability partially driven by participant interest.

8. **LDP training rarely provides participants with the opportunity to do “real work” together on project teams.** Developing solutions to real organizational problems provides the opportunity to work as teams, solve complex problems and apply particular tools and skills garnered from the program. The key, again, is to have organizational champions who support and mentor such teams and hold them accountable based on the success of their eventual presentations and resulting strategic initiatives.

CONTENT: Training Assumptions and Attendant Skills that Drive Our LDP Curriculum

Given limited time, the inevitable urgency of goals and the array of organizational complexities that face most leaders in higher education, there are a variety of learning outcomes that would provide the participants tangible skills and benefits. This program is about enhancing their *choices* as leaders, building new knowledge and skills, and providing the necessary practice so such skills can be internalized. These are the avenues to real, sustainable, behavioral change and increased leadership competence. It certainly is not leadership training *as usual*.

Ideally, we recommend a nine-day program (three, three-day modules) at an off site, residential location. Accommodations can be Spartan. **But it is *time* that is the critical independent variable upon which creative programming and success depend.** Following are important elements of our leadership curriculum.

I. The Measured Impact of Individual Leaders

All leadership development *begins with the impact of each leader on those he or she deals with on a daily basis.* This is predicated on an assumption that *the older the leader is, the more influence they have, the less those around them will tell them the truth, even at the time they most need it.* Such a negative premise is alive and well among subordinates in most hierarchical institutions such as Penn. Now add the complexity of tenure (real or implied) and the entitlements that occur in a university setting, and any leader is faced with a severe challenge – receiving the truth about his or her own impact or the decisions they make. We provide the skills and tools to help leaders receive the truth they need from those they lead. It is based on experience that no other organization can match (see below).

II. Working Effectively with the Collective

Leaders often talk about *collaboration, participation, and cooperation.* Yet few individuals have ever had a single course in the strategies and techniques to make these happen. These skills and techniques are modeled, demonstrated and expected throughout the work the program. Recent Gallup research provides consistent evidence that such skills are foundational to building trust and increasing, motivation, productivity and morale.

III. Intentional Leadership

It is our experience that many senior leaders are habitual in some of their approaches to leadership. Many of these quite capable individuals tend to “run on the fumes of old habits.” The result often is

conventional, narrowly defined, predictable and, often, ineffective behaviors that lack creativity and the ability to motivate those they need to influence.

Intentional Leadership is our rigorous, skill-based approach in which every aspect of the leader's behavior must be conscious and "intentional". The discipline and skills required precludes leaders blaming the audience when their group is unproductive or outcomes are not achieved. Here lies the key to leader resilience.

For example, our research shows that the typical mid or upper level organizational leader attends or leads an average of twenty to twenty-five meetings a week. Many are unproductive and do not engage those present in challenging, valuable ways. Even worse, our data suggest that few seek the feedback essential if they are to increase their own effectiveness. Senge's treatise on the *Learning Organization* is anemic at best in many schools of higher education where we have had the opportunity to work during the past decade.

IV. The Art of Design

Intentional leadership is predicated on a set of trainable skills that we call the *art of design*. It assumes the leader has a diagnostic mentality and crafts strategies that build on that diagnosis. A meeting with a half dozen agenda items would demand the "design" of six mini meetings each with a different way of utilizing those present, managing the time available and attaining the goals of each agenda item. The cost of eight senior level leaders in such a six agenda meeting will, based on salaries and benefits, cost a minimum of \$3000. Multiply that times hundreds of ill-prepared and poorly executed meetings and, then ask whether time and resources are being well spent? Herein lies the success of such an LDP. The key question for such leaders is how to leverage their influence and the sources of those present whenever two or more people convene.

Being skilled in design increases efficiency, and productivity. It places the leader in the position to *manage outcomes* and become *strategic* rather than reactive. It demands that leaders expand their repertoire of leadership behaviors, and a willingness to turn staid and predictable meetings into creative processes designed to meet the particular needs of the group. These, in turn, are translated into specific outcomes at *both* the task and process levels. Such skills can only be gained from experience during the training and from practice that follows each session.

V. Problem Solving and Decision Making

Most leadership involves solving problems and reducing conflicts or barriers to success. We find that most leaders have a very small number of overused approaches to challenges. Our role is to expand their choices so they have the tools and strategies to overcome the particular problem with which they are faced. Here leadership becomes a creative act, choosing the best "design" to deal with the issue at hand.

Most individuals are restricted in their capacity to solve such problems because the group dynamic gets in the way and they fail to have the means of effectively engaging themselves or their team in this, often delicate, process. Applying a broader array of tools and methods within the framework of intentional leadership and design will take these leaders to a higher level of leadership effectiveness. With it they will be more efficient, more engaging and have a greater ability to increase trust and the willingness to risk.

VI. The Aversion to Taking Risks

One of the challenges of individual leaders is overcoming the dysfunctional norms of a powerful and abiding university culture. For example, one norm that influences problem solving, decision-making

and the ability to collaborate is the *aversion to risk taking* that exists throughout The University. Being able to build a climate of trust and innovation, creativity and interest, is the job of any leader. They may not be able to change the dysfunctional norm of the larger system, but ***they have the ability to change the working climate of their portion of the organization.*** There are “designs” that will enable and encourage this to happen. It is our role to expand their repertoire of creative and effective designs, along with the ability to create those of their own.

VII. The Nature of High Performing Teams

We are currently a “team-based” culture. There are teams and task forces for virtually every function. Yet, it is the rare leader who has even been a member of a high performing team let alone has the skills to build one. Since leaders are assumed to understand the fundamentals of teams and group process, many feign familiarity even though few have had the benefit of training in group or team dynamics. Our job to provide fundamental skills and understanding in the arena of group dynamics and team-building that are foundational to all aspects of modern leadership, especially in relation to the collaboration, risk taking and problem solving so essential to the average team’s success.

Armed with these skills, participants will, then, be equipped to dramatically increase the effectiveness of their own teams.

VIII. Performance Hiring

It has often been said that the single most critical competency a leader must demonstrate is *the ability to hire the most skilled and effective team members.* Predictably, universities and large organizations waste millions of dollars a year farming out such a critical function to head-hunters. Not only does it reduce personal accountability, but our research over twenty years shows that it does not increase the quality or longevity of these hires.

The key is to reduce “false positives” – candidates that look good on paper or in a superficial interview, or with inflated recommendations and later prove to be ineffective once on the job. Our use of the some of basics skills of intentional leadership and design takes performance hiring to a new level. At the same time, it reduces the cost of obtaining high quality candidates who represent, over a few years, a million dollar investment to The University. And, of course, once hired, it is difficult to eliminate such errors.

IX. Performance Management

Paradoxically, the rush toward the bottom line and to higher worker productivity over the past decade has resulted in performance management and the supervisory process literally falling of the management table. Whether in the form of personnel motivation, individual development, accountability or feedback, most upper level leaders are increasingly committed as “doers” vs. managers and supervisors. Forty years ago the typical supervisor spent in the neighborhood of 20-30% of their time in the supervisory process. Today, our data suggest it is reduced to about 5%. The consequence is a huge increase in the money spent on professional coaches to fix what is broken. Or, if not, the dysfunction and risk aversion goes unaddressed until it reaches crisis proportions and there is no choice but to take action.

Along with this, the unrestricted use of technology has created greater stress and, often, inefficiencies because of unaddressed problems related to its use and misuse. We explore better ways of using the limited time devoted to this still critical dimension of leadership.

X. Time, Stress and Life Management

This is the very personal side of leadership, one that is increasingly swept under the rug. It represents the collateral damage of down-sizing, riffing, global competition and or poorly administered technological intervention. Yet, it is at the heart of morale and productivity, where resentment turns to passive aggression. In hierarchical organizations, traditionally top down in their orientation to subordinates, the unwillingness to speak the truth, criticize management or object to ineffective leadership often creates a climate of fear in which staff, who are not protected by tenure or other measures of security. Our LDP training takes a hard look at the current research and strategies available to address these concerns.

For management not to hear, substantiate or address the concerns of those working under them is to not address the key factors influencing productivity that, in turn, is usually “stated” as the highest priority of leaders. Again, it is here that leaders learn factors that increase their openness and resilience, their use of time and the ability to handle stress more effectively.

Key Factors that Separate The Napier Group from its Competitors

We wrote the best selling text - *Groups: Theory and Experience* (now in its seventh edition). We have been at the front line of such training for more than three decades. Our innovative designs create an unparalleled set of tools and skills that take leaders to the next level of competence.

In 1975, I helped develop and introduce the first 360 degree feedback program in the United States. Three years later we began to use it as part of teambuilding as a means of creating trust and shared risk among the participants while providing support as individuals dealt with the feedback and the implied changes to follow. How we collect, analyze, disseminate and build accountability into this process separates us from all others involved in this critical management practice.

In 1983, we developed the first *performance hiring* process in this country.

It is predicated on the belief that false positives occur when leaders (hiring teams) fail to differentiate between what candidates (including resumes and recommendations) say they can do rather than being able to demonstrate whether they have the critical skills essential for a particular role. In what we call *The Power Interview*, we provide the skills to both save the organization dollars, and, also, how to hire a better quality candidate who is, ultimately, a better fit for the organization.

Over the years, we have contributed a dozen books to our field including:

The Courage to Act, Making Groups Work, Measuring What Matters,

High Impact Tools and Activities for Strategic Planning, and

Intentional Design and the Process of Change.

Providing the integration of theory, experience, research and the applied skills demanded of a successful, resilient leader.

References can be Provided By:

Neil M. Meltzer - Senior Vice President, President Elect - LifeBridge Health System

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2006 - current *Conducted a number of LDP programs at Sinai Hospital within the LifeBridge Health System. Included in our services was a nine day offsite training of Neil's thirteen person Executive Leadership Team.*

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2006 – current *Worked closely with Dr. Rice on a variety of team building and issue specific initiatives (most recently a series on conflict). We have conducted 360s among a dozen critical physicians in her 100 person department including herself. As part of this initiative, we provided individual coaching to several members. Dr. Rice has personal knowledge of this aspect of our leadership development and what differentiates our services from other in our field.*

John P. Franko, M.D. - Professor & Chair - Department of Family Medicine, Quillen College of Medicine

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2000 – current *Over the past ten years both at the University of Virginia and currently at Quillen College of Medicine and ETSU, we have provided a variety of services ranging from Executive Training, Strategic Planning and from Team Building to Hiring. In early November 2011, we conducted a 2 day department wide "Patient Centered Care Initiative" with over 150 participants using the created designs discussed previously here.*

Michael Seitchik - (Project lead)

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2009 and 2011 *As sub-contractors, we provided intensive off site training in team dynamics to the top two hundred leaders at ARAMARK a company of 230,000 people.*

Wendy Witterschein - Director, Global Learning

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2002 – current *Designed and facilitated a total of sixteen, six day (two three-day modules) offsite training for BD Becton Dickinson (approx. 30,000) in the United States and Europe in Team Dynamics and Facilitation Skills. Additionally, we have supported senior leaders in building executive teams and resolving conflicts in critical departments in both the United States and Europe.*

Derek Gillman - Executive Director & President

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2010 – 2011 *Working with Derek and his leadership team, we conducted several offsite Executive Team Building sessions. In addition we designed and facilitated a long term visioning conference and authored a strategy to build trust and increased communications across the entire organization.*

Steve Grosso - President & COO

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2010 - current *Currently conducting an Executive LDP program along with introduction and integration of Quality Management.*

Tim Reeves - CEO

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2010 - current *In addition to an Executive LDP and organization wide cultural intervention, we facilitated the Power Interview for the hire of the new Creative Director.*