

Theses and Dissertations

2011

Assessing the impacts of a leadership development program on skill development and organizational performance

Gina Paone

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Paone, Gina, "Assessing the impacts of a leadership development program on skill development and organizational performance" (2011). *Theses and Dissertations*. 186.
<https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/etd/186>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Pepperdine Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Pepperdine Digital Commons. For more information, please contact bailey.berry@pepperdine.edu.

ASSESSING THE IMPACTS OF A LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

A Research Project
Presented to the Faculty of
The George L. Graziadio
School of Business and Management
Pepperdine University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
in
Organization Development

by
Gina Paone
August 2011

This research project, completed by

GINA PAONE

under the guidance of the Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has
been submitted to and accepted by the faculty of The George L. Graziadio
School of Business and Management in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Date _____

Faculty Committee

Committee Chair, Ann E. Feyerherm, Ph. D.

Committee Member, Julie A. Chesley , Ph. D.

Linda Livingstone, Ph. D., Dean
The George L. Graziadio School of Business
and Management

Abstract

The quality of an organization's leaders substantially influences organizational effectiveness (Bass, 1990). One way organizations seek to enhance the quality of their leaders is to conduct leadership development training. However, training and development does not automatically produce results (Cook, 2006). Too many organizations conduct training based on the implicit belief that it is beneficial, rather than upon quantifiable evidence. It is important to evaluate what tangible benefits actually can be associated with the training. This study assessed the impact of a leadership development program on one multinational organization, particularly as it concerned skill development and organizational outcomes.

This study used a mixed-method design and gathered data in three phases using two surveys and one interview. These methods were used to capture participants' reactions, learning, application, and outcomes related to the Leading Confidently training. Of the 285 trainees, 238 completed the first survey, 86 completed the second survey, and 41 completed an interview. Descriptive statistics were calculated for quantitative data and content analysis was used to examine the qualitative data.

Participants' reactions to the training were positive immediately after the training as well as 3 months and 6 months after the training. They reported having built a variety of skills at all three points in time and also reported having made performance improvements. Overall, the leadership development program evaluated in this study was found to lead to skill development and performance benefits among its senior management participants. While these can only be considered tentative results due to limitations affecting the data collection procedures, lack of contextual data, and shifts in sample size, the results of this study are promising. Future examinations of this topic can deepen these results and generate more insights about the outcomes expected from this program as well as the other factors that contribute to training outcomes in general.

Table of Contents

	Page
Abstract	iii
List of Tables	vii
Chapter	
1. Introduction	1
Purpose.....	3
Study Setting.....	3
Significance of Study.....	6
Organization of the Study.....	7
2. Literature Review	8
Leadership	8
Leadership Development	10
Designs	11
Success Factors.....	16
Obstacles	18
Benefits	20
Summary.....	22
3. Methods	23
Research Design.....	23
Sample.....	23
Protection of Human Subjects.....	25
Leading Confidentially Training	26
Instrumentation	28

Chapter	Page
Immediate Post-Training Survey	28
Three-Month Post-Training Survey	29
Six-Month Post-Training Interview.....	31
Validation.....	32
Data Collection.....	32
Data Analysis	32
Summary.....	33
4. Results.....	34
Immediate Post-Training Survey	34
Three-Month Post-Training Survey	38
Six-Month Post-Training Interview	42
Summary.....	46
5. Discussion	49
Conclusions	49
Impact on Skill Development.....	49
Impacts on Organizational Outcomes	52
Recommendations	54
Study Limitations.....	55
Suggestions for Future Study.....	57
Summary.....	58
References	60
Appendix	
A. Immediate Post-Training Survey	65

Appendix	Page
B. Three-Month Delayed Survey.....	69
C. Six-Month Delayed Interview.....	72

List of Tables

Table	Page
1. Training Interventions for Skill Building	14
2. Immediate Post-Training Survey Sample.....	24
3. Three-Month Delayed Post-Training Survey Sample.....	25
4. Six-Month Post Training Interview Sample	25
5. Leading Confidentially Modules and Objectives	27
6. Summary of Data Collection Procedures	33
7. Participants' Initial Reactions to the Training	34
8. Participants' Initial Perceived Skill Building from the Training.....	35
9. Participants' Evaluation of Training Logistics.....	36
10. Participants' Open-Ended Comments Immediately after Training	37
11. Participants' Use of Skills after 3 Months.....	39
12. Participants' Success with Skills after 3 Months	40
13. Impact of Training on Participants' Successful Use of Skills.....	40
14. Participants' Reactions to the Training after 3 Months.....	41
15. Applications of the Trained Skills after 3 Months	42
16. Applications of the Trained Skills after 6 Months	44
17. Reported Impacts of Trained Skills 6 Months after Training	45
18. Participants' Reactions to the Training after 6 Months.....	45
19. Participants' Reactions to Training across Three Points in Time	46
20. Summary of Training Impact and Application and Impact of Skills	47

Chapter 1

Introduction

An increasing body of evidence argues that leadership substantially influences organizational effectiveness (Bass, 1990). Therefore, to survive, organizations need the right kind of leadership, which involves creating a vision and strategic direction for the organization; communicating that vision to the organization's stakeholders (e.g., employees, customers); and inspiring, motivating, and aligning organization members to achieve this vision (Kotter, 1990). Turner (2007) added that public leaders must integrate their personal styles with their leadership abilities and align these with their organization's mission, culture, resources, and strategic needs. While these tasks are important for any organization, they are particularly vital and challenging for multinational organizations, which often orchestrate a sensitive and complex network of relationships, projects, and programs. For example, multinational organizations such as the International Monetary Fund need to coordinate with strategic partners and governing bodies such as national governments, non-governmental organizations, and private sector organizations. Understandably, even the most talented and charismatic leader can find this daunting.

Organizations with effective leaders tend to innovate, respond appropriately to changes in their markets and environments, creatively address challenges, and sustain high performance (Vardiman, Houghston, & Jinkerson, 2006). Conversely, when the leadership is poor, the organization can suffer losses in terms of productivity, support from stakeholders, and brand strength.

Nonprofit and for-profit companies have turned to leadership development programs to help equip their leaders to guide their organizations effectively. The intention is that participants in these programs will enhance their knowledge and improve their ability to effectively lead teams, organizations, and change. Allen and Hartman (2008) argued that the success of leadership development initiatives hinges upon their overall approach (objectives), the sources of learning utilized, and their effect on the participants. Turner (2007) speculated that unless leadership development programs are carefully designed, leaders will not emerge with a full array of skills necessary for success. Therefore, organizations should identify the specific knowledge, skills, and behaviors they require in their leaders along with those that are missing, and then provide leadership training to address those gaps.

Of the \$51 billion that United States organizations spend annually on training, more than \$14 billion was spent on leadership development (Dolezalek, 2005). While this may sound substantial, Cook (2006) warned that training and development does not automatically produce results. He explained that too many organizations conduct training based on the implicit belief that it is beneficial, rather than upon quantifiable evidence. He also pointed out that those who are responsible for staff development rate the connection between leadership development and the achievement of business objectives and profitability higher than others in the organization rate it. It is uncertain whether these differences are due to bias among training professionals or beliefs among people outside training departments that learning and development is a diversion of profits rather than an investment in improved capabilities and performance (Pickett, 2005).

Therefore, it is important to evaluate what tangible benefits actually can be associated with leadership development. Increasing awareness of these benefits by examining one organization's leadership development program was the focus of this study.

Purpose

This study examined the impact of a leadership development program on a multinational organization. Two research questions were explored:

1. Do leadership development programs increase the competency and use of skills in an organization?
2. Do leadership development programs have an impact on organizational outcomes?

A single case study design was used to explore these research questions. The focus was *Leading Confidently*, one module of a leadership development program at one organization.

Study Setting

The study organization is headquartered in Rome, Italy, and operates in more than 80 countries worldwide. It employs approximately 13,000 people with approximately 90% in field-based locations. Roughly 300 senior managers are in the organization.

The organization's mission is to save lives during refugee crises and other emergencies, and to improve nutrition and quality of life of the world's most vulnerable people at critical times in their lives. The organization has been carrying out this work since its creation in 1963. In addition, the organization

focuses on enabling development and providing food assistance by helping people build assets that promote self-reliance and provide other direct benefits.

The study organization recently made a significant shift in its work from providing *food aid*, which focuses on meeting a population's immediate nutrition needs, to providing *hunger solutions*, which focus on promoting self-reliance. This refocusing has emphasized a shift from short-term life-saving work to long-term life-saving through capacity building, which is achieved by reducing the population's dependency on aid and supporting governmental and global efforts to address the hunger challenge.

The vision laid out in the organization's strategic plan reflects a broad shift in how the organization will operate in the future under a reformed system. Specifically, there will be an increasingly prominent role and increased emphasis on host government capacity building and partnerships. This will call for broader and deeper relationships between the organization and host governments, donors, and partners as well as effectively confronting disruptive changes in the environment, geo-political dynamics, and socio-economic conditions. Funding at the local level also will become pivotal to achieving the organization's desired outcomes.

Several leadership competencies are required to fulfill the new vision, such as networking, observing governmental protocol, having political savvy, and promoting the organization's capabilities. Underlying all of these are strong persuasive communication and advocacy skills. Other competencies required include forming positions on and providing advisement related to a range of social policy issues. Leaders also need to be effective in devising a long-term

holistic strategy that incorporates new interventions, partners, and donors. Historically, these skills and competencies have not been emphasized as requirements for leadership in the organization. However, these are now considered essential. More specifically, a formal needs assessment conducted in 2008 identified four leadership capabilities that must be reinforced to accomplish the organization's strategic objectives:

1. Engaging, influencing, and forging partnerships with external actors such as national governments, donors, and the broader aid community.
2. Strategic visioning and planning.
3. Understanding social policy areas relevant to the organizational mandate.
4. Having a strong orientation to local resource mobilization and operating in a reformed overall environment.

A Leadership Development Program that had high visibility throughout the organization was designed to address these leadership needs. This internal program was noteworthy, as the organization had not had a leadership development program for more than 10 years. Leaders who pursued training and development did so on an individual basis through external providers.

The new Leadership Development Program is a modular skills development program designed to (a) challenge the way the organization's leaders think about the future and (b) provide leaders with tools to better prepare for the future. The program was delivered by an external training specialist. Candidates for the program were the 300 senior managers of the organization, meaning individuals with the following titles: regional director, deputy regional

director, country director, deputy country director, division director, and deputy director. Senior managers were located both at headquarters and in the field.

Ultimately, the aim of the program is to help the organization's senior managers strengthen their key internal and external relationships and increase their efficiency and effectiveness in successfully leading the implementation of the strategic plan. Learning objectives for participants are to:

1. Develop highly effective communication and presentation skills.
2. Learn a powerful framework and tactical skills for consultative selling.
3. Develop effective negotiation skills for maximizing value and advantage.
4. Learn a process to help create and grow more high-value relationships.
5. Learn advanced techniques for maximizing one's leadership style.

The Leading Confidently component, which was the focus for the present study, aimed to build leaders' behavioral skills and contextual credibility needed to be at the forefront of socioeconomic development and humanitarian policy issues.

Significance of Study

There is an increasing body of evidence that leadership makes a difference to organizational effectiveness (Bass, 1990). This evidence has fueled increased attention and effort on designing and implementing leadership programs. However, it is necessary, particularly within the public sector, to demonstrate a return on investment of these initiatives in terms of skill improvement and organizational outcomes. This study helped quantify the impact of one module of one leadership development program. Consequently, this study provides some initial data on the measurable impacts of this type of intervention.

Organization of the Study

This chapter outlined the background and purpose of the study, provided a description of the study setting, and identified the significance of the study. Chapter 2 reviews literature relevant to leadership development. Chapter 3 outlines the methods used in the study. Chapter 4 reports the study results. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This study examined the impact of a leadership development program on a multinational organization. This chapter provides an examination of studies related to the impact of leaders and leadership training related to organizational effectiveness. Although there is an immense amount of literature available on leadership as a whole, the main objective of this chapter is to identify the best practices, processes, and systems in leadership development to determine which practices most contribute to skill enhancement and organization performance.

Leadership

“The need for leaders and leadership is a perennial subject that traces its beginnings to the Old Testament, ancient China, and 16th century Italy” (Safferstone, 2005, p. 959). Nevertheless, Kotter (1990) argued that organizations tend to be over-managed and under-led, emphasizing that there is a great need for real leadership in organizations. For example, in 1995, Ralph Larson, then chairman and chief executive officer of Johnson and Johnson identified that leadership was the company’s most critical business issue and also was the single biggest constraint to its growth (as cited in deMerville, 2007).

It is not surprising, then, that an abundance of literature is available on leadership theory and practice (Ardichvili & Manderscheid, 2008). While authors and researchers diverge on whether people are born as leaders, developed into leaders, or inspired and thrown into leadership due to situational factors (Kreitner, 2004), the existing literature has identified definitions of leadership, the need for leadership in modern organizations, and the benefits of effective

leadership for organizational performance. Various leadership models and leadership development strategies also have been proposed (Ardichvili & Manderscheid, 2008; Bass, 1990; de Vries, 2003; London, 2002; Safferstone, 2005; Yukl, 2002).

What these various sources emphasize is that leadership ultimately is dedicated to ensuring that human capital is developed, sustained, and deployed successfully. Day and Halpin (2004) asserted that leadership begins with a set of cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral skills. These skills may include envisioning the future and establishing goals, communicating and rallying support for the vision, putting the plans in place to achieve the vision, and planning for their implementation (London, 2002; Waters, 2009). When these skills are supported by attributes such as self-awareness; openness; trust; creativity; and practical, social, and general intelligence, the foundation for effective leadership is formed. Effective leaders establish and reinforce the organization's values and purpose, develop a vision and the strategies necessary to achieve the vision, build the community necessary to implement the strategies, and initiate and manage the changes necessary to assure growth and survival (Block & Manning, 2007; Bodinson, 2005; Reinertsen, Pugh, & Bisognano, 2005). Thus, leaders have direct and significant impacts on organizations' abilities to implement and sustain strategic change initiatives and these leaders' behaviors lay the foundation for the achievement of all organizational goals (Pickett, 2005).

Given the impact leaders have on organizational performance, it is essential that these leaders are effective. However, today's organizations are facing challenges in attracting, retaining, and developing the best talent—

especially in leadership. Because developing an organization's human capital is a critical factor for long-term success, it can be highly advantageous to develop leaders among the organization's existing employees (Oxman, 2002). Leader development activities help employees in the organization obtain the skills required for effective leadership (Lord & Hall, 1992). Specifically, ongoing leadership development programs can create a deep bench of leadership capacity throughout the organization (Turner, 2007). According to Turner, this is particularly needed in government agencies. The topic of and techniques involved in leadership development are examined in the next section.

Leadership Development

Much more than training, leadership development is a complex process for systematically developing leaders' skills, knowledge, and behaviors. For example, General Electric's (GE) leadership development process begins with identifying and recruiting potential leaders into one of its elite leadership programs. These programs are highly competitive and function as a rite of passage to higher levels. In these programs, members are given assignments and training opportunities that position them to address current business issues and problems. Members also are given the opportunity to develop informal networks with other participants (Waters, 2009). Together, these activities help participants develop the experience and expertise needed to become effective leaders throughout GE. The following sections describe the key designs, success factors, obstacles, and benefits associated with leadership development programs.

Designs

Leadership development cannot be delivered in a random or unplanned way if it is to be effective (Weiss & Molinaro, 2006). Training must have a clear, central purpose that defines how people's performance of their roles will be affected. Ideally, the best training programs create a sense of identification with the core values and beliefs they are attempting to transfer to participants (Avolio, 1999). Training also must be designed to achieve the objectives of transferring vital skills and ideas to participants and reinforcing the corporate culture and values. To do so, organizations should identify the specific behaviors it expects and the typical gaps most managers exhibit. Leadership training should then address those gaps (Turner, 2007). Even when the organization has a strong culture and tends to develop managers with a common set of skills and strengths, it is necessary to create a carefully planned and designed program to assure that leaders develop with the full array of skills necessary for success (Thomas, 2008). Additionally, Crosbie (2005) emphasized that critical to the success of any leadership development program is making it memorable, which is accomplished through excellent instructional design.

One particular design feature that is both memorable and impactful is a *crucible event*, a term from United States Marine military training that refers to a key development experience where trainees' skills, determination, and ability are put to the test through an extended series of obstacles that require cooperation, collaboration, and inner strength. These crucible events are used to foster a new generation of leaders, to enable the organization to replenish itself, and to expand its ranks (Thomas, 2008). While these are helpful, Thomas pointed out

that these must be connected to the day-to-day management of operations to be most beneficial.

Another important design feature is taking account of and building upon the trainee's self-knowledge. Caccioppe (1998) suggested that trainees be given time to reflect on their new learning and how it could be assimilated into their existing personal and professional environments. Additionally, the leadership program should expand and build upon the manager's sense of self-esteem and self-worth. It also should contribute something new, surprising, and interesting to the participants about the world in which they operate. Individual leaders respond best when they learn about themselves, learn skills that help them better lead their team, and learn how to make a substantial contribution to the organization's business success.

Scott and Hartman (2008) identified four common approaches to leadership development. They explained that these approaches can be combined and each has valuable characteristics. Therefore, care should be taken when designing the program to ensure that the right combination of activities is included. The four approaches are:

1. Personal growth: Programs or activities that induce participants to reflect on their behaviors, values, and desires (such as their orientation toward risk or personal intimacy).

2. Conceptual understanding: Programs or activities that foster a conceptual understanding of leadership. These activities are theory-oriented by nature and focus on developing participants' cognitive understanding of the phenomenon.

3. Feedback: Programs or activities where feedback constitutes a large portion of the time and emphasis is placed on measuring the participants' skills in a wide range of leader behaviors. Conger (1993) argued that feedback is a critical feature of any development program, as it helps potential leaders understand their strengths and weaknesses.

4. Skill building: Program designers identify what they perceive to be the key leadership skills that can be taught. These are formulated into modules and introduced to participants, who practice or model specific behaviors. Participant performance is critiqued and feedback identifies their strengths and weaknesses. Participants then practice and refine their skills. Conger emphasized that taking a skill-building focus requires that leadership abilities (e.g., communication, motivation) be broken down into actual mechanical processes that can be performed. He outlined nine training interventions that have been used for skill building (see Table 1).

A popular framework for leadership development programs is Vicere and Fulmer's (1996) seven-stage model, which outlines the key tasks to carry out when designing training:

1. Articulate strategic imperatives. Key strategic objectives are vital to the survival, success, and growth of organization. Therefore, leadership development should be closely aligned to the business objectives of the organization.

2. Set objectives for development. This step requires precise definition of the objectives for the program, the competencies to be developed, and the issues and constraints affecting the program.

Table 1

Training Interventions for Skill Building

Intervention	Description
Just-in-time training	Designed to provide the learner with information at the time of need or crisis. Examples include podcasts, videos, or case studies with examples on how to apply specific applications of leadership principles.
Developmental assignments	Features two attributes: challenge and an opportunity to learn.
Simulations	Creates experiential environments where learning occurs and participants' behaviors can be observed and modified.
Games	Consists of interactions among participants in a carefully prescribed setting that is governed by a set of rules and procedures.
Personal development plans	Individually outlined goals and plans for achieving those goals. The individual takes responsibility for these goals and plans.
Action learning	Learning from concrete experience and critical reflection on that experience through group discussion, trial and error, discovery, and learning from and with each other.
Job enrichment	Creating a more meaningful job by adding tasks that are of greater and lesser responsibility to the participants' existing roles.
Job enlargement	Expanding participants' roles by adding similar meaning tasks (rather than simply adding identical, boring, or repetitive tasks).
Job rotation	Lateral transfers of participants between jobs in an organization.

Note. Adapted from material presented in "The brave new world of leadership training," by J. Conger, 1993, *Organization Dynamics*, 22(3), pp. 46-59.

3. Identify appropriate methods. Usually carried out by internal human resource professionals and/or external consultants, this step focuses on defining the content, method, and timing of the program.

4. Select providers and design specific learning programs. This step encompasses the actual design and delivery of the program. Typically, the organization develops relationships with a university, a management institute, or some type of a consulting organization to carry out this step.

5. Evaluate the program's delivery and effectiveness. This step involves rigorous evaluation of each stage of the program to assure that it delivered the promised outcomes.

6. Integrate with the management and human resources system. This step ensures that the participant's manager is aware of the major outcomes and competencies taught during the program. The purpose of this step is to actively encourage and support the participant in utilizing and implementing the learned skills. The human resources systems that operate within the organization also need to be aligned with the strategic directions, issues, and skills that are covered in the program.

7. Overall assessment of the program's value, broad objectives, and philosophy. This step involves examining the overall program and considering whether it is delivering value to the business; whether the objectives and underlying strategic issues have changed; and whether the philosophy on how, when, and where the program is run are still viable.

The significance of Vicere and Fulmer's (1996) model is that it outlines the full lifecycle of planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating the leadership development program. It also places emphasis on aligning the program to strategic objectives and ensuring that those objectives are met and that value is generated as a result of the program. This is in sharp contrast to many other leadership development programs, which spend most of their efforts identifying methods and approaches and selecting providers and learning methods (Scott & Hartman, 2008). In such cases, the objectives and priorities for development often are set by the human resources professionals and then approved by the

senior management team, rather than being based on an articulation of strategic imperatives with and by the chief executive officer and senior management team. It is important to match the personal and professional development of participants and build this into the evaluation process for meaningful results.

Success Factors

Examination of the literature suggests that content, alignment, and organizational support are key success factors for leadership development programs. Regarding content, Kur and Bunning (2002) argued that the program should be based on enhancing leaders' self-development and self-worth. They added that leadership development programs should be designed around three themes: business, leadership, and personal development.

In terms of alignment, care should be taken to assure that the program and the methods of learning are in sync with the organization, its strategy, and its people (Allen & Hartman, 2008). While Cook (2006) emphasized that it is particularly important to link the learning program to the strategic direction of the company, Lamoureux (2008) argued that alignment with other talent management functions is needed for organizations to fully realize the benefits of their investment in leadership training.

The importance of support was emphasized in Bersin & Associates' November 2008 report of the results of its study of best practices in leadership development programs across more than 30 vendors and multinational organizations. They found that companies with solid leadership development programs (a) consider learning a priority, (b) weave leadership development into the company's overall talent management system, and (c) establish learning

programs for each level of management (Lamoureux, 2008). These practices suggest that strong organizational support for leadership development is a necessary ingredient for the success of the learning program.

These three factors of content, alignment, and organization support are aimed at the objective of having participants draw knowledge from the source of learning and improve their ability to effectively lead their teams, their organization, and organizational change (Allen & Hartman, 2008).

UPS is one company that has seemed to implement these factors. Schwartz (2011) explained that in recent decades, UPS leadership realized they needed to take a hard look at training, leadership development, and succession planning to ensure that the company was positioned to grow in today's fast changing, global environment. UPS since has taken numerous strides to revitalize its global training, leadership development, and succession planning practices. For example, UPS realized that its training and leadership development models did not take into account that managers should have an understanding of how the core of what they do every day (logistics) helps the customers compete on a global scale. UPS now creates job models and leadership competencies that align with the company's goals and priorities.

Additionally, Schwartz (2011) pointed out that the company revised its Corporate School to better meet their learning needs. The Corporate School was first created in 1946. Historically, its programs consisted of instructor-led courses that accommodated about 2,800 managers and supervisors each year. The courses were very expensive to run and were about only 50% effective. In August 2008, UPS launched a completely redesigned Corporate School program

that aligned with the development of the leadership competencies; kept pace with the enterprise demand for development; leveraged more cost effective, progressive, and timely methods of training; and offered a more flexible and customized approach to training.

Obstacles

Despite that executives are increasingly expressing the need to focus on leadership development initiatives, few are actively growing organizational leaders as part of their business strategy (Leskiw & Singh, 2007). These findings are evident in Giber, Carter, and Goldsmith's (2000) findings that while almost all the organizations surveyed indicated the need to develop leaders, only 44% actually had a formalized process to do so. In the absence of formalized programs, these organizations may not be adequately prepared to compete in the ever-changing business environment. IBM learned this lesson the hard way: it stopped focusing on leadership development in the 1980s and associated this move with its loss of market leadership in later decades (Ready & Conger, 2003).

Literature also is developing around why some leadership development efforts fail (Ready & Conger, 2003). Examination of the literature points to three key obstacles that stymie the effectiveness of leadership development: lack of support or involvement from senior management, failing to make learning a focus at the enterprise level (Lamoureux, 2008), and lack of innovative design (Conger, 1993).

One of the biggest obstacles to leadership development is lack of support or involvement from senior management (Lamoureux, 2008). Without such support and involvement, the program will not be integrated with the rest of the

organization and the resources for an effective and strategic program will not be available.

Another obstacle is failing to make learning a focus at the enterprise level (Lamoureux, 2008). Without this kind of focus, learning becomes a minor effort, often resulting in purchasing and implementing off-the-shelf programs rather than designing strategic interventions around the organization's issues (Ready & Conger, 2003). Off-the-shelf programs rarely have a powerful impact on organizational performance. Further, the metrics used to assess the effectiveness of leadership development in these programs may be inappropriate, as most existing measures focus on activity rather than capability.

The third obstacle is the lack of innovative design. Conger (1993) explained that many approaches to leadership development are based around the same four basic areas that have been used for years. These are skill-building (e.g., decision-making), concepts (e.g., differences between leaders and managers), outdoor adventures (e.g., for the purpose of building teamwork), and feedback (ranking on a scale of leadership dimensions). When these areas arbitrarily become the focus of leadership development without adequate attention to content, alignment, and organizational support, suboptimal efficacy tends to result.

To overcome these obstacles, Allen and Hartman (2008) argued that leadership development needs to be viewed as part of the fabric of the organization. Otherwise, they will not receive the support and attention needed to achieve the maximum effect on participants. Training should not be conceived of as a discrete program, but rather as an organizational intervention supported by

other interventions over time. The next sections review the benefits that can result when the necessary time, resources, and attention are dedicated to leadership development.

Benefits

The ongoing success of any organization is directly dependent on the quality of both its current leadership and its ability to effectively advance future leaders through its pipeline (deMerville, 2007). As a result, leadership development is becoming an increasingly critical and strategic imperative for organizations in the current business environment (Leskiw & Singh, 2007). The goal of strategic leadership training is building the cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral skills necessary for an executive role and achieving meaningful, lasting behavior change in participants (Day & Halpin, 2004). Bowen and Ostroff (2004) argued that development, when strategically linked with human resource management practices, is a key predictor of overall organizational performance.

Developing the organization's leaders has been shown to have both financial and strategic incentives (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990; Reed & DeFillippi, 1990). Watson Wyatt (2003) found that the quality of an organization's leadership development activities has a direct impact on the organization's financial outcomes such as revenue growth, profitability, and market share. In their study, the 34 organizations that had superior financial performance also had high-quality leadership development programs. In contrast, only 6% of those organizations that had below-average financial performance had high quality leadership development programs. Similarly, Bersin & Associates' study revealed that strategically designed leadership development programs were associated

with strong executive engagement and a high-impact leadership development strategy that generated the following results: improved business results; increased quality in the leadership pipeline; improved teamwork, engagement, and retention of leaders; and increased overall employee retention (Lamoureux, 2008). Kur and Bunning (2002) similarly argued that leadership development programs help boost business performance and enhance leadership and team skills.

Leadership training also is consistent with a strategic approach to development. Human capital theorists have argued that firm-specific skills are non-transferable; therefore, the value of an existing employee's human capital will be higher than that of an equally experienced but newly hired employee. It follows that developing a company's existing employee base will help maximize the value of its human capital, heighten the organization's return on investment in development, and be less likely to result in a capital loss (Becker, 1976; Lepak & Snell, 1999).

Given these collected findings, it is not surprising that Pickett (2005) found that consistently effective organizations are those that have superior strategies for managing and developing people, focus on both individual capability and organizational capability, have learned to measure people as assets as well as costs, and are able to resist the short-run pressures that cause chronic under-investment in people.

GE is one example of a company that has made executive development a priority and has achieved demonstrable enhancement of leadership skill and organizational performance gains (Rowe, White, Lehmer, & Phillips, 2009).

Rowe et al. found in a comparative study of firms led by GE-trained chief executive officers to similar firms led by non-GE-trained chief executive officers that the organizations headed by GE-trained leaders outperformed the others. Rowe et al. concluded that GE's reputation for developing chief executive officer talent is, in fact, well deserved and not mere hype. Waters (2009) similarly credited GE's long-term success to the education and training of its professional employees. He added that GE executives often are successful and highly marketable, even outside GE. Consequently, the company's employee development process has become a competitive advantage for GE.

Summary

The literature is filled with evidence of the benefits of human capital development, especially at the senior leadership levels. Investment in leadership development is a key factor for long-term success. Additionally, it is helpful to leverage the best practices and design frameworks offered in the literature (Allen & Hartman, 2008). Doing so likely would create a system or culture of leadership development rather than simply producing a leadership development program.

Nevertheless, little evidence-based guidance is available in the literature on which specific design features are useful and which show little return on investment (Allen & Hartman, 2008). This study adds to the body of knowledge by expanding the evidence base on design features that would be helpful for building the skills and knowledge of leaders in public organizations. The next chapter describes the methods used in this study.

Chapter 3

Methods

This study examined the impact of a leadership development program on a multinational organization. Two research questions were explored:

1. Do leadership development programs increase the competency and use of skills in an organization?
2. Do leadership development programs have an impact on organizational outcomes?

This chapter describes the research design, sample, protection of human subjects, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis procedures. The chapter closes with a summary.

Research Design

The research design for this study was a mixed-method survey study. Data were collected at three different times: immediately following the training program using a paper-and-pencil survey, 3 months after the training program using an online survey, and 6 months after the training program using a telephone interview. Each instrument gathered a combination of quantitative and qualitative data.

Sample

All 300 senior managers employed by the study organization were invited to participate in the training program. Of these, 285 attended the program. All participants were invited to complete the first two rounds of the survey. A total of 238 (83.5%) completed the first survey. These respondents represented various duty stations and roles, although 16 respondents did not provide this type of

information (see Table 2). More than half (55%) were in field locations and 33% were located in headquarters. Five roles were represented: country director (26%); deputy country director (17%); chief (14%); director, including regional director, deputy regional director, and directors in headquarters (8%); and other (28%).

Table 2

Immediate Post-Training Survey Sample

Position	N (%)	Duty station
Country director	61 (26%)	Field
Deputy country director	41 (17%)	Field
Chief	33 (14%)	Headquarters
Director	20 (8%)	Headquarters
Other	67 (28%)	
No response	16 (7%)	

N = 238

A total of 86 (30.2%) of the original 285 trainees completed the 3-month delayed post-training survey. Roughly one quarter (26%) were in field locations and 16% were located in headquarters (see Table 3). More than half (58%) did not provide duty station location information. Five roles were represented: country director (14%); deputy country director (12%); chief (6%); director, including regional director, deputy regional director, and directors (10%). This sample represented 36% of the original respondents (20% of country directors, 24% of deputy country directors, 15% of chiefs, 45% of directors, and 7% of others).

A stratified random sample of participants was chosen for the telephone interviews so that the sample would equally represent field and headquarters staff. A total of 41 trainees were interviewed. Of these, 53% were in field

locations and 46% were at headquarters (see Table 4). Five roles were represented: country director (29%), deputy country director (24%), chief (12%), directors (22%) and other headquarters-based staff (12%). This sample represented 14% of the original respondents (20% of country directors, 24% of deputy country directors, 15% of chiefs, 45% of directors, and 7% of others).

Table 3

Three-Month Delayed Post-Training Survey Sample

Position	N (%)	Duty station
Country director	12 (14%)	Field
Deputy country director	10 (12%)	Field
Chief	5 (6%)	Headquarters
Director	9 (10%)	Headquarters
Other	5 (6%)	
No response	45 (52%)	

N = 86

Table 4

Six-Month Post Training Interview Sample

Position	N (%)	Duty station
Country director	12 (29%)	Field
Deputy country director	10 (24%)	Field
Chief	5 (12%)	Headquarters
Director	9 (22%)	Headquarters
Other	5 (12%)	Headquarters

N = 41

Protection of Human Subjects

Approval to conduct the study was obtained through the director of human resources of the agency on March 28, 2010, and Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board on July 23, 2010. Additionally, the researcher completed the Human Subjects Research Participants web-based training course

sponsored by the National Institute of Health of Extramural Research on September 20, 2009.

The survey instruments distributed to participants explained the research study and voluntary nature of participation. Participants' consent to partake in the study was implied by completing the survey. Participants faced no apparent risks or costs and received no financial incentives by being involved in the study. The only inconvenience to participants was the time involved in completing the survey. However, adequate time during the final stages of the training program was allocated for completing the immediate post-survey. Similarly, participants' consent to be interviewed was gained when the researcher phoned them to conduct the interview.

All participant responses were kept confidential and participants were not obliged to put their name on the survey. Only aggregate data was reported in this study and in any subsequent analysis or future publication of the results. Participants were offered a summary report of the results upon completion of the study.

All research data were stored securely in the researcher's locked file cabinet during the study and will be kept in this location for 5 years following the study, after which time they will be destroyed.

Leading Confidently Training

The focus of this study was a new and highly visible leadership development program created by the study organization for internal senior managers. The need for the new program stemmed from the agency's updated strategic plan for 2008 to 2011, which marked a historical shift from the agency

operating as a food aid agency to operating as a food assistance agency. The agency's overarching goal is to reduce dependency and to support governmental and global efforts to ensure long-term solutions to the hunger challenge.

Given this shift, the agency's senior managers had to effect organizational change, lead the agency into the future, and inspire consistently high performance among employees if the objectives laid out in the agency's strategic plan were to be achieved. One component of this program, entitled *Leading Confidently*, was evaluated for the purposes of this study.

Leading Confidently is a face-to-face 5-day training session on leadership communication and behavioral skills. Topics include leadership and communication, influencing and selling, networking, and negotiations. These topics are organized into six modules (see Table 5). The training was delivered by a facilitator external to the agency.

Table 5

Leading Confidently Modules and Objectives

Module	Objective
1. Persuasive presenting	Develop highly effective communication and presentation skills.
2. Influencing and selling	Learn a powerful framework and tactical skills for consultative selling.
3. Negotiating for advantage	Develop effective negotiation skills for maximizing value and advantage.
4. Strategic relationship management	Learn a process to help create and grow more high-value relationships.
5. Leadership styles workshop	Learn advanced techniques for maximizing their own leadership style.
6. Leading a championship team	Learn a powerful framework for leading a high performance team.

Training was customized to the agency and its strategic plan. For example, case studies were based upon experiences within the agency and relevant analogies.

All participants in the program were at the senior management level, including roles such as regional, divisional, and country directors. A total of 285 of the agency's 300 senior managers attended the training.

Instrumentation

Three instruments were used to collect data for this study: an immediate post-survey, a 3-month delayed post-survey, and a 6-month delayed post-interview. The following sections describe the design of these instruments.

Immediate Post-Training Survey

The purpose of the immediate post-training survey was to gather participants' immediate reflections and reactions to the training. The survey (see Appendix A) was designed to be completed in 5 minutes and was organized into five sections:

1. Overall reaction. Collecting data about participants' learning and reactions immediately following the program often is the first critical level of feedback in the training evaluation process that alerts those involved in the training design and delivery whether there is a need to adjust or refine the program. Participants were asked to indicate whether they believed the training was relevant to their work, important to their success, a source of new information, and useful for successfully implementing the strategic plan. They also were asked whether they would recommend the training to other senior leaders and whether they planned to use the knowledge and skills from the

training. Phillips and Phillips (2007) explained that these measures have predictive capabilities relative to whether trainees will actually implement and receive benefit from their learning. These items were scored on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

2. Learning. Measuring learning is critical, especially when the training program focuses on skill building. Participants were asked whether the training increased their abilities related to 14 specific competencies in communication and negotiation, stakeholder management, leadership and motivation of others, and relationship building. These items were scored on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

3. Logistics. Participants were asked to indicate how much they liked the facilitator, handouts, balance of training and free time, advance communications about the training, training duration, and the training venue.

4. Open-ended comments. One open-ended question invited participants to share their comments or suggestions about the training. This question was considered optional.

5. Personal details. Participants were invited to indicate their position and name. These questions were considered optional. The responses were used to create a profile of the sample.

Three-Month Post-Training Survey

The purpose of the 3-month post-training survey (see Appendix B) was to assess the short-term impacts of the training program on the specific leadership skills that the program intended to develop. The survey was administered online

to all participants of the Leading Confidently program. The nine skills that were examined using this survey included:

1. Structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations.
2. Comfortably handling difficult questions.
3. Effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages.
4. Articulating clearly and confidently the agency's brand and its differentiation from "competitors."
5. Effectively representing the agency's positions in discussions with stakeholders.
6. Advancing the agency's interests in negotiations while maintaining key relationships.
7. Developing a specific relationship strategy and action plan.
8. Utilizing relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high-value relationships with the agency's partners, donors, etc.
9. Motivating staff to improve efficiency and implement the agency's strategic plan.

For each of these skills, participants were asked to indicate (a) the amount they used the skill, (b) the success they had in using the skill, and (c) any change in their amount and success of use related to the skill compared to what they experienced before the training. Each of these questions was rated on a five-point Likert scale from very low to very high. Participants also were invited to describe the ways they used their learning from the training using one open-ended question.

Six-Month Post-Training Interview

The purpose of the 6-month post-training interview (see Appendix C) was to gather insights about how participants used the skills taught during training and what impacts these skills had. Their reflections and reactions to the training also were gathered.

Interviews were conducted with 41 training participants 6 months after the training was conducted. The interview began with describing the study purpose, the nature of participation, and confidentiality and consent procedures. Following this introduction, participants were asked to describe situations in which they applied their learning from the Leading Confidently training. Participants specifically were asked to share experiences related to the nine competencies examined during the 3-month post-training survey. The second and third questions asked participants to describe the ways in which their learning led to positive outcomes. Question 4 asked participants about their plans to build upon their training in the future.

Question 5 asked for their overall reactions to the training, now in retrospect. Specifically, they were asked to indicate whether they believed the training was relevant to their work, important to their success, a source of new information, and useful for successfully implementing the strategic plan. These items were scored on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Question 6 invited participants to share any further comments they had related to the training and its effects. Finally, participants were invited to share their name, current position, and position at the time of the training.

Validation

All three instruments were reviewed and determined to be valid by Dr. Jack Phillips of the ROI institute using the organization's proprietary methodology (Phillips & Phillips, 2002). Phillips suggested revisions to the instruments and these revisions were made. Appendixes A–C contain the finalized instruments that were used in the study.

Data Collection

Data were collected using a three-step training evaluation process that followed participants for 6 months to assess their reactions, learning, application, and impact of the Leading Confidently face-to-face training program. Phase 1, the immediate post-training survey, was designed to assess trainees' reactions and learning. Phase 2, the 3-month delayed post-training survey, assessed trainees' application of learned skills. Phase 3, the 6-month delayed post-training interview, gathered data about the impacts of the training on participants' work.

The immediate post-training survey was distributed to the 285 trainees and was completed by 238 respondents, yielding a 83.5% response rate. A total of 86 of the 285 trainees completed the 3-month delayed post-training survey, yielding a 30.2% response rate. A total of 41 phone interviews were conducted, reflecting 14.4% of the trainee population. Table 6 presents a summary of the data collection approach.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were calculated for the quantitative items on each survey and interview. The qualitative data were examined and the researcher identified common themes across participants' responses. Several consistent

themes were identified between different management functions. The findings from this study also were presented to the main stakeholders of the training (e.g., trainers, human resources, participants).

Table 6

Summary of Data Collection Procedures

Phase and purpose	Instrument and Method	Response Rate
Phase 1: Reaction and learning	Immediate post-training survey. Participants completed the survey at the end of the training session.	238 respondents (83.5% response rate)
Phase 2: Application	Three-month delayed post-training survey. Participants received an email link to the online survey 3 months after the training was conducted.	86 respondents (30.2% response rate)
Phase 3: Impact	Six-month delayed post-training interview. Participants were contacted by telephone 6 months after the training was conducted.	41 interviewees (14.4% of population)

Summary

This chapter described the methods used to identify the impact that leadership development training had on increasing skills and, thereby, indirectly influencing better outcomes for an organization. This study used a mixed-method design and gathered data in three phases using two surveys and one interview. These methods were used to capture participants' reactions, learning, application, and outcomes related to the Leading Confidently training. Of the 285 trainees, 238 completed the first survey, 86 completed the second survey, and 41 completed an interview. Descriptive statistics were calculated for quantitative data and the qualitative data were subjected to content analysis. The next chapter reports the study findings.

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The data gathered for each of the three phases of data collection are presented sequentially. The chapter ends with a summary.

Immediate Post-Training Survey

Participants' overall reactions to the program were positive immediately following the training (see Table 7). The highest mean score was reported for their intentions to use their learning (mean = 4.72, $SD = 0.47$). The lowest mean score was reported for their perceptions of the training's usefulness for strategic plan implementation (mean = 3.99, $SD = 0.73$). High mean scores were recorded for all items.

Table 7

Participants' Initial Reactions to the Training

Question	Range	Mean	SD
I intend to use knowledge and skills from this training,	3–5	4.72	0.47
I would recommend the training to other senior leaders.	2–5	4.67	0.56
I find that this training is relevant to my work in the agency.	3–5	4.65	0.52
I find that this training is important to my own success.	2–5	4.49	0.62
I find that this training is a source of new information.	1–5	4.25	0.64
I find that this training is useful for strategic plan implementation.	2–5	3.99	0.73

$N = 238$; Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Participants were asked to evaluate their perceived skill building as a result of the training for 14 specific skills (see Table 8). The highest score was reported for structuring clear, concise, and impactful oral and written communication (mean = 4.31, $SD = 0.56$). On average, participants agreed that

they built all but 3 of the 14 skills as a result of the training. The remaining three skills (talking about the agency's key messages, generating loyalty and confidence in staff, and speaking with poise and confidence without advance preparation) received mean scores ranging from 3.83 to 3.94, which reflects a neutral rating.

Table 8

Participants' Initial Perceived Skill Building from the Training

Skill	Range	Mean	SD
As a result of the training, I am now better able to . . .			
Structure clear, concise, and impactful oral and written communication	3–5	4.31	0.56
Deliver messages with confidence, authority, and presence	3–5	4.26	0.53
Adapt my leadership and communication style to suit different audiences	2–5	4.24	0.68
Use tools for strategic relationship management	3–5	4.24	0.62
Use negotiation tools to achieve success in achieving the agency's objectives and maintaining long-term relationships	2–5	4.18	0.64
Use tools and skills to maximize staff performance	3–5	4.17	0.64
Address questions, objections, and complaints	2–5	4.11	0.62
Leverage personal style and unique negotiating strengths	3–5	4.11	0.61
Identify and respond to the key needs of both potential and existing stakeholders	3–5	4.09	0.58
Use creative, reinforcing visuals	2–5	4.07	0.69
Gain commitment from others	2–5	4.00	0.57
Talk about the agency's key messages	2–5	3.94	0.71
Generate loyalty and confidence in staff	2–5	3.93	0.68
Speak with poise and confidence without advance preparation	2–5	3.83	0.78

N = 238; Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Participants also were asked to evaluate the logistics of the training (see Table 9). Participants gave high ratings regarding the facilitator (mean = 4.78, *SD* = 0.46); handouts (mean = 4.25, *SD* = 0.59); and the balance of training and free

time (mean = 4.00, *SD* = 0.88). On average, participants reported neutral scores for the advance communications, facilities, and duration of the training.

Table 9

Participants' Evaluation of Training Logistics

Item	Range	Mean	<i>SD</i>
I liked the facilitator.	3–5	4.78	0.46
I liked the handout materials.	3–5	4.25	0.59
I liked the balance of training time with free time.	1–5	4.00	0.88
I liked the advance communications about the training.	1–5	3.74	0.90
I liked the facilities at the ATAHOTEL Villa Pamphili.	1–5	3.71	0.88
The 5-day training duration was appropriate.*	1–3	2.28	0.52

N = 238; Scale for duration: 1 = disagree, 2 = neutral, 3 = agree; Scale for all other items: 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Participants provided a number of comments related to the training (Table 10). The comment provided by the greatest number of participants (*N* = 76) was that the course was excellent. One participant stated, “Perhaps the most meaningful training I have taken in the agency that should result in some real improvement in my leadership, management, and communication skills,” while another expressed, “I found the training both inspirational and useful. It will take a conscious effort to put the tools provided into use and I plan to do so and expect significant personal improvement.”

Several participants also commented on the excellent facilitation (*N* = 25). One participant shared, “The trainer is excellent, knowledgeable, and managed the participants very professionally.” Another explained, “Most agency trainings tend to be inward or depend on people in the agency to speak or train. What was so great about this training was a fresh external perspective.”

Several participants (*N* = 25) believed the training should be offered to employees at lower levels. Other frequently cited comments were that the

duration should be 3 or 4 days in duration rather than the current 5-day format ($N = 20$) and that the content should be more closely linked to the work of the agency ($N = 16$).

Regarding the content of the program, participants noted that the training needed to be linked to the work setting to a greater degree ($N = 16$) and that more time needed to be built into the sessions for practicing the skills being taught ($N = 11$).

Table 10

Participants' Open-Ended Comments Immediately after Training

Theme	N
Excellent course	76
Excellent facilitation	25
Difficulties with having and measuring skill application and impact	7
Suggestions for audience	
People at lower levels should have this training	25
Beneficial to have participants from across the agency	7
Suggestions for logistics	
Hotel too remote	10
Hotel features not ideal	6
More advance communication with participants	6
Need more free time	2
Duration, timing, and pace	
Training should be shorter	20
Too rushed at times	8
Too slow at times	6
Training should be longer	3
Adjust pacing	2
Suggestions for content	
Need more link to work setting	16
Need more practice time	11
Additional content needed	7
Rotate participant seating	3
More examples needed	3
Build in more cultural diversity	2

$N = 238$

In summary, the attendees reported at the initial evaluation of the program that they would recommend the program, and they intended to use the skills learned in the training in the future. They also praised the facilitator, including his skills and approach; appreciated the content covered, and liked the unique networking opportunity experienced during the face-to-face course.

Three-Month Post-Training Survey

At the 3-month post-training survey, participants were asked to rate their use, success with, and change in nine particular skills that had been focused on during training. Regarding their use of the skills, participants ranged from using the trained skills very little to very much (see Table 11). On average, participants used them to a moderate amount. The most-used skills were effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages (mean = 3.61, $SD = 0.84$) and effectively representing the agency's positions in discussions with stakeholders (mean = 3.52, $SD = 0.89$). The least used skills were developing specific relationship strategy and action plan (mean = 3.11, $SD = 1.01$) and utilizing a relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high value relationships with the agency's partners and donors (mean = 3.13, $SD = 1.00$). However, these items also exhibited the highest variance, suggesting that participants used these skills to a widely varying degree.

Similarly, participants reported having very little to very much success with the skills after 3 months (see Table 12). On average, participants reported having moderate success. The skills they had the most success with were structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations (mean = 3.62, $SD = 0.67$), effectively and confidently

communicating the agency's messages (mean = 3.62, $SD = 0.72$), and comfortably handling difficult questions (mean = 3.60, $SD = 0.62$). The skill they had the least success with was utilizing a relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high value relationships with the agency's partners and donors (mean = 3.16, $SD = 0.89$).

Participants reported that, on average, the training had moderate impact on their use and success with these skills, although participants' individual perceptions varied (see Table 13). The highest impacts were reported for effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages (mean = 3.39, $SD = 0.83$), comfortably handling difficult questions (mean = 3.35, $SD = 0.71$), and advancing the agency's interests in negotiations while maintaining key relationships (mean = 3.35, $SD = 0.77$). The lowest impact was reported for Developing specific relationship strategy and action plan (mean = 3.10, $SD = 0.94$).

Table 11

Participants' Use of Skills after 3 Months

Skill	Range	Mean	SD
Effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages	1-5	3.61	0.84
Effectively representing the agency's positions in discussions with stakeholders	1-5	3.52	0.89
Structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations (e.g., Exec Brief)	1-5	3.51	0.74
Motivating staff to improve efficiency and implement the agency's strategic plan	1-5	3.50	0.96
Advancing the agency's interests in negotiations while maintaining key relationships	1-5	3.46	0.82
Comfortably handling difficult questions	1-5	3.44	0.71
Articulating clearly and confidently the agency's brand and its differentiation from "competitors"	1-5	3.23	0.89
Utilizing relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high value relationships with the agency's partners, donors, etc.	1-5	3.13	1.00
Developing specific relationship strategy and action plan	1-5	3.11	1.01

$N = 86$; Scale: 1 = very little use, 3 = moderate use, 5 = very much use

Table 12

Participants' Success with Skills after 3 Months

Skill	Range	Mean	SD
Structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations	1–5	3.62	0.67
Effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages	1–5	3.62	0.72
Comfortably handling difficult questions	1–5	3.60	0.62
Effectively representing the agency's positions in discussions with stakeholders	1–5	3.58	0.75
Motivating staff to improve efficiency and implement the agency's strategic plan	1–5	3.49	0.79
Advancing the agency's interests in negotiations while maintaining key relationships	1–5	3.48	0.76
Articulating clearly and confidently the agency's brand and its differentiation from "competitors"	1–5	3.33	0.86
Developing specific relationship strategy and action plan	1–5	3.21	0.87
Utilizing relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high value relationships with the agency's partners and donors	1–5	3.16	0.89

N = 86; Scale: 1 = very low success, 3 = moderate success, 5 = very high success

Table 13

Impact of Training on Participants' Successful Use of Skills

Skill	Range	Mean	SD
Effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages	1–5	3.39	0.83
Comfortably handling difficult questions	1–5	3.35	0.71
Advancing the agency's interests in negotiations while maintaining key relationships	1–5	3.35	0.77
Structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations	1–5	3.33	0.75
Motivating staff to improve efficiency and implement the agency's strategic plan	1–5	3.32	0.91
Effectively representing the agency's positions in discussions with stakeholders	1–5	3.29	0.82
Utilizing relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high value relationships with the agency's partners and donors	1–5	3.15	0.95
Articulating clearly and confidently the agency's brand and its differentiation from "competitors"	1–5	3.13	0.91
Developing specific relationship strategy and action plan	1–5	3.10	0.94

N = 86; Scale: 1 = very little impact, 3 = moderate impact, 5 = very high impact

Participants' overall reactions to the program were positive, although their perceptions were less favorable than immediately after the training (see Table 14). The highest mean score was reported for the training's relevance to their work in the agency (mean = 4.34, *SD* = 0.68). The lowest mean score was

reported for their perceptions of the training’s usefulness for strategic plan implementation (mean = 3.83, *SD* = 0.84).

Table 14

Participants’ Reactions to the Training after 3 Months

Question	Range	Mean	SD
In retrospect, I would describe the training as . . .			
relevant to my work in the agency.	2–5	4.34	0.68
important to my own success.	1–5	4.23	0.85
a source of new information.	1–5	4.02	0.78
Useful for strategic plan implementation.	2–5	3.83	0.84

N = 86; Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Participants reported their actual applications of the skills learned during training (see Table 15). The most frequently cited skill, mentioned by 55% of the 86 respondents, was structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations. One participant explained he “used [these skills] in presentations and briefing sessions, in speeches to a range of groups, and in meetings with partners and donors, and with staff. Also [I have] undertaken training sessions with staff to pass on key skills.” Two skills were not mentioned by any respondents: developing a specific relationship strategy and action plan and utilizing a relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high value relationships with the agency’s partners and donors. The remaining skills were mentioned by 1% to 13% of respondents. Additionally, 10% of the respondents stated they made little or no application of the skills.

Table 15

Applications of the Trained Skills after 3 Months

Skill	Sample Applications	N	%
Structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations	Used in presentations and briefing sessions, in speeches to range of groups, and in meetings with partners and donors, and with staff. Also undertaken training sessions with staff to pass on key skills	47	55%
Advancing the agency's interests in negotiations while maintaining key relationships	I have enjoyed negotiating and persuading government officials and other agencies/non-governmental organizations' staff on key operational issues by using skills acquired in the training. Listening attentively before making points as well as identifying successes and bright proposals of counterparts as a way of recognizing their strengths before providing my side makes it easy to convince them.	11	13%
Effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages	I find I have used mostly in key messaging to staff and strategic partners	7	8%
Building relationships	In particular, it was useful was to understand the different types of people that make a team	7	8%
Comfortably handling difficult questions	I have been using [the] principles to address difficult questions (either external or internal)	4	5%
Effectively representing the agency's positions in discussions with stakeholders	Discussions with other agencies on agency matters	3	3%
Motivating staff to improve efficiency and implement the agency's strategic plan	I encourage staff to focus on our goal	3	3%
Articulating clearly and confidently the agency's brand and its differentiation from "competitors"	Up front thinking of what the key message(s) are and understanding the differences and selling points are	1	1%
Developing a specific relationship strategy and action plan	None	0	0%
Utilizing relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high value relationships with the agency's partners and donors	None	0	0%
Limited or no application of skills	Unfortunately, my current work assignment does not allow me to make full use of the training.	9	10%

N = 86

Six-Month Post-Training Interview

A random selection of 41 senior managers completed one-on-one telephone interviews 6 months after the training sessions. Participants were asked to identify the skills for which they could name concrete situations of

applying learning from the training program (see Table 16). They also were asked to describe their actual applications of the skills. The most frequently cited skill, mentioned by 78% of the 41 interviewees, was structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations. One participant explained she was “much more focused and concise in donor communications.” Another elaborated that he had “learned how to put the core message up front.” Three additional skills were cited by at least half of the trainees: comfortably handling difficult questions (63%), effectively and confidently communicating the agency’s messages (63%), and motivating staff to improve efficiency and implement the agency’s strategic plan (56%). Additionally, it is notable that all the skills were noted as being applied by the interviewees.

Table 17 presents a sample list of tangible outcomes participants associated with the training. For example, regarding the skill of effectively and confidently communicating the agency message, one participant explained that he conducted breakfast meetings and received very positive feedback about them. Regarding the skill of comfortably handling difficult questions, one participant explained that he “managed to calm a situation in which another agency believed it was a competitor in the social protection sector.”

Finally, at the 6-month post-training interview, participants were asked to rate their overall reactions to the program. These scores were higher than the 3-month scores and approached or exceeded the initial scores (see Table 18). The highest mean score was reported for its relevant to my work in the agency (mean = 4.81, *SD* = 0.40). The lowest mean score was reported for it being a new

source of information (mean = 4.19, *SD* = 0.60). High mean scores were recorded for all items.

Table 16

Applications of the Trained Skills after 6 Months

Skill	Sample Applications	<i>N</i>	%
Structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations	Much more focused and concise in donor communications	32	78%
Comfortably handling difficult questions	Has enabled me to diffuse aggressiveness without being defensive in some heated meetings	26	63%
Effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages	Able to market the agency's skill set without challenging the position of others in large forums	26	63%
Motivating staff to improve efficiency and implement the agency's strategic plan	Discussed the strategic plan with colleagues going to workshops and enhanced awareness	23	56%
Advancing the agency's interests in negotiations while maintaining key relationships	Taking interpersonal styles into account has been extremely helpful in maintaining relationships with banks	17	41%
Effectively representing the agency's positions in discussions with stakeholders	Ensured complementary actions with sister agencies, while defending the agency in interagency meetings	16	39%
Articulating clearly and confidently the agency's brand and its differentiation from "competitors"	Can recognize differences while articulating that what the agency wants to do can be done in a complementary way	12	29%
Utilizing relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high value relationships with the agency's partners and donors	Has never seen a group of people so excited about a mere "form" as the one proposed for relationship strategy	9	20%
Developing a specific relationship strategy and action plan	Can now think more strategically about partnerships and the interest of the other party	7	17%

N = 41

Table 17

Reported Impacts of Trained Skills 6 Months after Training

Skill	Tangible Outcome
Structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations	Conducted breakfast meetings and received very positive feedback.
Comfortably handling difficult questions	Managed to calm a situation in which another agency believed it was a competitor in the social protection sector.
Effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages	Negotiated with governments the design of a new program. Managed to convince that the agency should get 50% of share of funding (among three other agencies)
Articulating clearly and confidently the agency's brand and its differentiation from "competitors"	Managed to convince counterparts to support standpoint in donor meeting and "tricky" situation with government.
Effectively representing the agency's positions in discussions with stakeholders	Headed a meeting with all agencies regarding a code of conduct issue Successfully handled a series of press interviews
Advancing the agency's interests in negotiations while maintaining key relationships	Provided government with a cost analysis on the agency purchasing and delivering food
Developing a specific relationship strategy and action plan	Developed road maps with UNICEF in the joint HIV/AIDS school feeding programs
Utilizing relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high value relationships with the agency's partners and donors	Negotiated with governments the design of a new program budget submission Managed to convince that the agency should get 50% of share of funding (among three other agencies)
Motivating staff to improve efficiency and implement the agency's strategic plan	Introduced monthly \$10 contribution of all international professional staff to the National Staff Association

Table 18

Participants' Reactions to the Training after 6 Months

Question	Range	Mean	SD
In retrospect, I would describe the training as . . .			
relevant to my work in the agency.	4–5	4.81	0.40
important to my own success.	3–5	4.38	0.59
useful for strategic plan implementation.	3–5	4.24	0.62
a source of new information.	3–5	4.19	0.60

N = 41; Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Summary

This chapter presented the results of the study. Participants' reactions to the training were positive immediately after the training as well as 3 months and 6 months after the training (see Table 19). The highest scores across all three time periods were that the participants found the training relevant to their work. The lowest scores across the time periods were that the training was a source of new information and that it was useful for implementation of the agency's strategic plan. All the scores were lower at the 3-month post-training survey compared to the initial survey. The 6-month post-training survey approached or exceeded the initial survey results. However, the changes in scores might be a result of changes in the sample or the method of inquiry.

Table 19

Participants' Reactions to Training across Three Points in Time

Question	Immediate N = 238	3-month post N = 86	6-month post N = 41
I find that this training is relevant to my work in the agency.	4.65 (0.52)	4.34 (0.68)	4.81 (0.40)
I find that this training is important to my own success.	4.49 (0.62)	4.23 (0.85)	4.38 (0.59)
I find that this training is a source of new information.	4.25 (0.64)	4.02 (0.78)	4.19 (0.60)
I find that this training is useful for strategic plan implementation.	3.99 (0.73)	3.83 (0.84)	4.24 (0.62)

Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree

Table 20 presents a summary of the training impact and participants' application and impact of their learned skills. Participants' perceptions about which skills had been developed the most through training varied from the immediate post-training survey to the 3-month post-training survey.

Table 20

Summary of Training Impact and Application and Impact of Skills

	Immediately after training N = 238	3 Months N = 86	6 Months N = 41
Top skills built	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structuring clear, concise, and impactful oral and written communication Deliver messages with confidence, authority and presence Use tools for strategic relationship management Adapt my leadership and communication style to suit different audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages Comfortably handling difficult questions Advancing the agency's interests in negotiations while maintaining key relationships 	
Most frequently used skills		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations Comfortably handling difficult questions Effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages
Most successful skills		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations Effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages Comfortably handling difficult questions 	
Impacts			Impacts noted for each of the nine skills

At both the 3-month post-training survey and the 6-month post-training survey, participants reported that the skill they used most was structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations. This also was reported at 3 months as one of their most successful skills they used. After 6 months, the participants reported positive impacts resulting from their use of the nine learned skills. The next chapter provides a discussion of these results.

Chapter 5

Discussion

This study examined the impact of a leadership development program on a multinational organization. Two research questions were explored:

1. Do leadership development programs increase the competency and use of skills in an organization?
2. Do leadership development programs have an impact on organizational outcomes?

This chapter presents a discussion of the study results, including conclusions, recommendations, study limitations, and suggestions for future study.

Conclusions

Conclusions were drawn for each research questions based on the study data. These conclusions are discussed in the sections below.

Impact on Skill Development

At all three points in time, participants reported the training was relevant to their work in the agency. Immediately after the training, they expressed strong intentions to use the knowledge and skills they gained. They also generally believed they developed all of the 14 skills examined using the immediate post-training survey. The skill area of structuring clear and concise communication was generally higher than the connection to the strategic plan. This could imply that this was an area highlighted in the training or maybe this was easier to put into use because of the role that the senior manager plays in the organization.

On average, after 3 months, participants were neutral about their use and success with the nine skills that were examined at that time. They also were

neutral about the degree to which the training had developed their skills. The slight drop in mean scores could be explained by a type of placebo effect, where immediately after the training, participants have high expectations for implementing what they learned in the program. This was evidenced by one participant who emphasized that his scores reflected his intentions and that application is yet to be seen. When the participants returned to the workplace, they might not have had the opportunity to apply the skills, or the reality of applying their skills did not live up to their intentions or expectations. The shifts in the scores also could be explained by the changes in the sample across the points in time.

After 6 months when asked about the impacts of the training on skill development, the participants most frequently mentioned using three skills: structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations; comfortably handling difficult questions; and effectively and confidently communicating the agency's messages. Additionally, all of the 41 participants interviewed after 6 months reported using each of the nine skills that were examined. Given that the training was designed specifically to be relevant to the senior managers' work and high visibility and support throughout the organization, the study findings concerning skill development echo the success factors for leadership development named in the literature that the content must be relevant (Kur & Bunning, 2002), learning must be aligned with structures in the rest of the organization (Allen & Hartman, 2008; Cook, 2006; Lamoureux, 2008), and there must be leadership and other organizational support for the program (Lamoureux, 2008).

It is important to note that at all three points in time, there was variability in the scores. This means that while, on average, the participants agreed that they used, had success with, and applied the trained skills, individual participants' scores ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. This could be explained by participants' experience with leadership and training programs. For example, in the open-ended comments, some participants mentioned that they had taken the course before, had been using these skills already, or already knew the material. In such cases, the training naturally would be perceived to have had less effect.

Nevertheless, overall these findings suggest that the leadership development was relevant to the senior managers' work and that, based on participants' perceptions, the training did help build their skills, particularly as it concerned composing documents and presentations, handling difficult questions, and communicating the agency's messages.

Identifying that the training did have a beneficial and sustained impact on participants' skills is important, given that the goal of strategic leadership training is to build the cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral skills necessary for an executive role and achieving meaningful, lasting behavior change in participants (Day & Halpin, 2004). Based on these results, it appears that the program has been at least moderately successful in assuring that the leaders develop with the full array of skills necessary for success. This is a key characteristic of a successful leadership development program (Thomas, 2008). These findings suggest that the investment the agency made in the program was worthwhile, as the participants did build the nine skills intended in the design.

While these results are encouraging, it is important to note that limitations of sampling, measurement, confounding variables, and missing data might have accounted for the results. These limitations point to the need for additional research.

Practical recommendations based on this finding are to continue delivering this training at the agency, as it appears to have a beneficial impact on leaders' skill development. Training efficacy for lower scoring skills (e.g., articulating clearly and confidently the agency's brand and its differentiation from "competitors"; developing specific relationship strategy and action plan; and utilizing relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high value relationships with the agency's partners, donors, etc.) might be enhanced by increasing organizational support for them or aligning them with the strategic plan.

Practical recommendations for other organizations relative to leadership development are to ensure that the training is relevant, novel, applicable to participants' work, and focused on building needed skills. These recommendations are consistent with the success factors of relevant content (Kur & Bunning, 2002), alignment (Allen & Hartman, 2008; Cook, 2006; Lamoureux, 2008), and organizational support (Lamoureux, 2008) named in the literature.

Impacts on Organizational Outcomes

Participants at all three points in time agreed that the training was important to their success. This perception was highest immediately after the training and lowest 3 months after the training. Participants also reported lower

scores for whether the training was useful for strategic plan implementation. Interestingly, this perceived impact was highest 6 months after the training. Similar to the previous conclusion, the changes in these scores could be explained by the participants' high expectations immediately upon completion of the training compared to facing the realities of the workplace or by the changing sample size. During the interview, participants also attributed several outcomes and successes to the training. For example, regarding effectively and confidently communicating the organization's messages, one participant said he "managed to convince a funding source that his agency should get a 50% share of the funding (among three other agencies)." Importantly, participants provided examples for each of the nine skills examined.

These findings were expected, given that carefully designed leadership development is a key predictor of overall organizational performance (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Additionally, other authors also emphasized that developing the organization's leaders leads to financial and strategic benefits for the organization (Kur & Bunning, 2002; Prahalad & Hamel, 1990; Reed & DeFillippi, 1990; Watson Wyatt, 2003). However, it is important to note that the present study measured individual-level achievements that had implied impact on organizational performance rather than measuring organizational performance itself.

The implication of these findings is that the leadership program appears to have led to important individual-level achievements and these achievements, in turn, have the potential to influence organizational performance. Therefore, it appears that the design is sound. In particular, teaching key skills, allowing

participants to practice these skills during the program, and assuring the training is relevant and immediately applicable are critical features of any leadership training.

An important limitation that should be noted related to this conclusion is that organization-level outcomes were not assessed at any time before or after the program. Therefore, impacts on organizational outcomes must be inferred. Further, the individual-level performance outcomes are based on self-report and it is impossible to determine the accuracy of participants' self-evaluations.

Based on the present findings, a strong business case for the impact of this training program on organizational outcomes cannot be made. However, the initial evidence of an impact is promising. Therefore, the practical recommendations emerging from this study are to continue delivering the program and implement pre- and post-training performance measurements to better assess the training's organizational impacts.

Recommendations

The leading practical recommendation from this study for the agency is to continue delivering this training, as it appears to have a beneficial impact on leaders' skill development. Indications are promising that organizational performance benefits also result from the training.

Based on the findings from this study, other agencies and organizations are advised to implement design features into their leadership programs that are similar to this agency's program. For example, it is important to ensure that the training is relevant, novel, immediately applicable to participants' work, and focused on building needed skills. Time also should be built into the training

program to allow participants to practice the skills they are learning. As participants recommended, building in follow-up coaching after participants have had time to apply the skills in their own settings would be an additional feature that may prove beneficial.

To gain full benefit from the training, trainees are advised to look for or create opportunities to apply learned skills in their work environment. Trainees also would benefit from securing support and follow-up coaching for themselves once they return to work. Ultimately, it is advisable that the training does not stop when the session ends. Ensuring that learning continues could be the work of the trainee, the manager of trainee, or the program designers.

For organizations to detect the organizational performance benefits that resulted from the training, it is necessary to identify the desired impacts and then design appropriate performance measures that would be applied before the training and at appropriate intervals after the training. For example, agency funding might be tracked immediately before the training and at 2 weeks, 3 months, 6 months, and 1 year after the training. This could indicate the impact of the training on the participant's ability to negotiate in this arena.

Study Limitations

A key limitation of this study is that it endeavored to determine the impact of leadership development programs on organizational outcomes. However, organization-level outcomes were not assessed at any time before or after the program and any impacts on organizational outcomes must be inferred. Future studies should assure that direct measurements of organizational outcomes are taken if determine this kind of impact is a goal of the study.

Another limitation of this study is that all the data were based on self-report. Obvious limitations to self-reported data are that the participants might have consciously or subconsciously reported data to make themselves look like “good students,” or to help make the program look good. Additionally, their self-evaluations may be overly critical or overly generous. They also may be overly conservative or overly generous in attributing any changes in their skills to the training. All of these factors influence the credibility of the findings. In future studies, 360-degree evaluations or more objective performance measures could be utilized to enhance the credibility of the data.

Additionally, no baseline data were recorded relative to participants’ skills or organizational performance. Therefore, the impacts of the training were retrospective and self-reported. Retrospective perceptions are influenced by a number of factors, such as participants’ memory and experience since the event. These affect the accuracy and credibility of the data. Future studies should collect baseline data immediately before the training to avoid this limitation.

Further, several factors other than the training may account for the changes in skill or organizational impacts that were reported. For example, the participant may have sought coaching to further develop the skill; however, the presence and impacts of these influences were not measured. Future studies should gather data on what the participant did, if anything, to further develop the skills after training or any factors, beyond their skills, that led to the organizational impacts they reported.

The sample also was not consistent across the three points in time and was relatively small for the second ($N = 86$) and third ($N = 41$) rounds of data

collection. It is possible that the results would be very different if the entire population was surveyed at 3 months and 6 months. Future studies should strive to utilize a consistent sample across the three points in time and use a coding system to allow monitoring for each participants' answering trends.

Demographic data (e.g., gender, experience) that could have generated insights about the nature of participants' answers were not consistently gathered to enable further analysis of the factors associated with skill development and impact. Future studies should gather data such as age, gender, years in field, years in organization, and years in a senior management position. For example, Gilligan (1982) asserted that women tend to be more relational. Consequently, women might have shown greater use and success with the soft skills developed in this training. Additionally, in the open-ended comments, some participants stated that they already had been using and already knew the material given their tenure in leadership, the field, and the agency. Therefore, participants' years of experience might have influenced the impact of the training on their use and success with the skills.

Suggestions for Future Study

The suggestion for future study is to conduct this study again, implementing the various recommendations for data collection advised in the previous section. This future study would collect self-report; 360-degree; and other, more objective performance data. To measure organizational impacts, it will be necessary to identify what organization-level outcomes are desired and design appropriate measures of these outcomes. Importantly, these data would be collected immediately before the program, immediately after the program, and

at various intervals thereafter to measure changes in skill development and organizational impact.

The future study also would gather new data. Participants would be asked to describe what factors also helped develop their skills or produce the organizational effects to help identify other factors contributing to the results. Demographic data such as age, gender, years in field, years in organization, and years in a senior management position will be gathered to generate insights about whether these factors are associated with particular successes with skill development or organizational achievements.

Finally, every effort must be made to assure that the sample is consistent and to code each participants' surveys across the duration of the study. This will be necessary to rule out the possibility that the observed changes are the result of shifts in the sample.

A study of this nature is expected to generate findings that are insightful and credible. Thus, this would be an important follow-up to the present study.

Summary

The quality of an organization's leaders substantially influences organizational effectiveness (Bass, 1990). One way organizations seek to enhance the quality of their leaders is to conduct leadership development training. However, training and development does not automatically produce results (Cook, 2006). Too many organizations conduct training based on the implicit belief that it is beneficial, rather than upon quantifiable evidence. It is important to evaluate what tangible benefits actually can be associated with the

training. This study assessed the impact of a leadership development program on one organization.

Participants' reactions to the training were positive immediately after the training as well as 3 months and 6 months after the training. They reported having built a variety of skills at all three points in time and also reported having made performance improvements. Overall, the leadership development program evaluated in this study was found to lead to skill development and performance benefits among its senior management participants. While these can only be considered tentative results due to limitations in the study, the results are promising. Future examinations of this topic are expected to generate more insights about the outcomes that can be expected from this program as well as the other factors that contribute to leadership development.

References

References

- Allen, S. J., & Hartman, S. (2008). Leadership development: An exploration of sources of learning. *S.A.M. Advanced Management Journal*, 73(1), 10.
- Ardichvili, A., & Manderscheid, S. (2008). Emerging practices in leadership development: An introduction. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 10(5), 619-631.
- Avolio, B. (1999). *Full leadership development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bass, B. (1990). *Bass & Stogdill's handbook of leadership: Theory, research and managerial applications* (3rd edition). New York: The Free Press.
- Becker, G. S. (1976). *The economic approach to human behavior*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Block, L., & Manning, L. (2007). A systemic approach to developing frontline leaders in healthcare. *Leadership in Health Services*, 20(2), 85-96.
- Bodinson, G. (November, 2005). Changing healthcare organizations from good to great. *Quality Progress*, 22-29.
- Bowen, D. E., & Ostroff, C. (2004). Understanding HRM-firm performance linkages: The role of the "strength" of the HRM system. *Academy of Management Review*, 29, 79-83.
- Cacioppe, R. (1998). An integrated model and approach for the design of effective leadership development programs. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 19(1), 44-53.
- Conger, J. (1993). The brave new world of leadership training. *Organization Dynamics*, 22(3), 46-59.
- Cook, P. (2006). Management and leadership development: Making it work. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 38(4), 213-216.
- Crosbie, R. (2005). Learning the soft skills of leadership. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 37(1), 45-51.
- Day, D. V., & Halpin, S. (2004). *Leadership development: A review of industry best practices (Technical Report No. 1111)*. Fort Leavenworth, KS: Army Research Institute.
- deMerville, B. (2007). Enterprise leadership. *Organization Development Journal*, 25(4), 83-88.
- Dolezalek, H. (2005). 2005 industry report. *Training*, 42(12), 14-28.

- Giber, D., Carter, L., & Goldsmith, M. (2000). *Linkages Inc.'s best practices in leadership development handbook*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer.
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- de Vries, K., & Manfred, F. R. (2003). Doing an Alexander: Lessons on leadership by a master conqueror. *European Management Journal*, 21(3), 370-375.
- Kotter, John P. (1990). *What leaders really do*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Kur, E., & Bunning, R. (2002) Assuring corporate leadership for the future. *The Journal of Management Development*, 21(9/10), 761–779.
- Kreitner, R. (2004). *Management* (9th ed.). New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Lamoureux, K. (2008). *High-impact leadership development 2009: Trends, best practices, industry solutions and vendor profiles*. Oakland, CA: Bersin & Associates.
- Lepak, D., & Snell, S. (1999). The human resource architecture: Toward a theory of human capital allocation and development. *Academy of Management Review*, 4(1), 31-48.
- Leskiw, S., & Singh, P. (2007). Leadership development: Learning from best practices. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 28(5), 444-465.
- London, M. (2002). *Leadership development: Paths to self-insight and professional growth*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Lord, R. G., & Hall, R. J. (1992). Contemporary views of leadership and individual differences. *Leadership Quarterly*, 3, 137-157.
- Oxman, J. P. (2002). The hidden leverage of human capital. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 43, 79-83.
- Phillips, P. P., & Phillips, J. J. (2007). *The value of learning: How organizations capture ROI and translate them into support, improvement and funds*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Pfeiffer.
- Phillips, P. P., & Phillips, J. J. (2002). *Measuring ROI in the public sector*. Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development.
- Pickett, L. (2005). Optimizing human capital: Measuring what really matters, *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 37(6), 299-303.

- Prahalad, C. K., & Hamel, G. (1990). The core competence of the corporation. *Harvard Business Review*, 68, 70–91.
- Ready, D. A., & Conger, J. A. (2003). Why leadership development efforts fail. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 44(3), 83-88.
- Reed, R., & DeFillippi, R. (1990), Causal ambiguity, barriers to imitation, and sustainable competitive advantage. *Academy of Management Review*, 15, 88-102.
- Reinertsen, J., Pugh, M., & Bisognano, M. (2005). *Seven leadership leverage points for organization-level improvement in health care*. Cambridge, MA: Institute for Healthcare Improvement.
- Rowe, W. G., White, R. E., Lehmborg, D., & Phillips, J. R. (2009). General Electric: An outlier in CEO talent development. *Ivey Business Journal*. Retrieved December 10, 2010, from http://wwwold.iveybusinessjournal.com/article.asp?intArticle_ID=811
- Safferstone, M. J. (2005). Organizational leadership: Classic works and contemporary perspectives. *CHOICE: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries*, 42, 959-975.
- Schwartz, A. (2011). Leadership development in a global environment: Lessons learned from one of the world's largest employers. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 43(1), 13-16.
- Scott, J. A., & Hartman, N. S. (2008). Leadership development: An exploration of sources of learning. *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, 73(1), 10-19.
- Thomas, R. A. (2008). Crucibles of leadership development. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 49(2), 15-18.
- Turner, J. (2007). Developing executive leadership in the public sector. *The Public Manager*, 36(4), 50-55.
- Vardiman, P., Houghston, J., & Jinkerson, D. (2006). Environmental leadership development: Toward a contextual model of leader selection and effectiveness. *Leadership & Organizational Development Journal*, 27(2), 93-105.
- Vicere, A., & Fulmer, R. (1996). *Leadership by design*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Weiss, D., & Molinaro, V. (2006). Integrated leadership development. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 38(1), 3-11.
- Waters, R. C. (2009). Evolution of leadership development at General Electric. *Engineering Management Journal*, 21(1), 42-46.

Watson Wyatt. (2003). Leadership: The critical key to financial success. *Drake Business Review*, 1(1), 21-5.

Yukl, G. (2002). *Leadership in organizations* (5th ed.) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Appendix A
Immediate Post-Training Survey

Training Survey

Please take this 5-minute survey to help us improve the Leading Confidently training.

I. Overall Reaction

1. Please rate your agreement with the following:

This training is...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
... relevant to my work at WFP					
... important to my own success					
... a source of new information					
... useful for successful Strategic Plan implementation					

2. Please assess your agreement with the following:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would recommend the training to other senior leaders					
I intend to use the knowledge and skills from this training					

II. Learning

3. Please assess your agreement with the following:

As a result of taking the Leading Confidently training, I'm now better able to ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
... deliver messages with confidence, authority and presence	1	2	3	4	5
... structure clear, concise, and impactful oral and written communication	1	2	3	4	5
... use creative, reinforcing visuals	1	2	3	4	5
... speak with poise and confidence without advance preparation	1	2	3	4	5
... talk about WFP's key messages	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
... identify and respond to the key needs of both potential and existing stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5
... gain commitment from others	1	2	3	4	5

4. Please assess your agreement with the following:

As a result of taking the Leading Confidentially training, I'm now better able to ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
... address questions, objections and complaints	1	2	3	4	5
... leverage personal style and unique negotiating strengths	1	2	3	4	5
... use negotiation tools to achieve success in achieving WFP's objectives and maintaining long-term relationships	1	2	3	4	5
... use tools for strategic relationship management	1	2	3	4	5
... adapt my leadership and communication style to suit different audiences	1	2	3	4	5
... use tools and skills to maximize staff performance	1	2	3	4	5
... generate loyalty and confidence in staff	1	2	3	4	5

III. Logistics

5. Please assess your agreement with the following:

I liked the...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
... facilitator, Andrew Cassim	1	2	3	4	5
... handout materials	1	2	3	4	5
... balance of training time with free time	1	2	3	4	5
... the advance communications about the training	1	2	3	4	5
... facilities at the ATAHOTEL Villa Pamphili	1	2	3	4	5

6. Please answer the following:

The 4.5-day duration of the training was...	... too short	... ideal	... too long
---	---------------	-----------	--------------

IV. Comments

7. Please feel free to add additional comments/suggestions about the Leading Confidently training.

V. Personal details (optional)

8. Please select your position (optional):

Chief		Director	
Country Director		Programme Advisor	
Deputy Country Director		Regional Director	
Deputy Regional Director		Other	

9. Please leave your name (optional),
so we may contact you for additional feedback, if necessary:

Appendix B
Three-Month Delayed Survey

Survey: Application of Leading Confidently Learning

Please describe the extent, success, and change in your use of the following skills

1. Structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations (e.g., Exec Brief).

	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Amount I have used	1	2	3	4	5
Success I've had in using	1	2	3	4	5
Change in amount and success of use since before the training.	1	2	3	4	5

2. Comfortably handling difficult questions.

	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Amount I have used	1	2	3	4	5
Success I've had in using	1	2	3	4	5
Change in amount and success of use since before the training.	1	2	3	4	5

3. Effectively and confidently communicating WFP messages.

	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Amount I have used	1	2	3	4	5
Success I've had in using	1	2	3	4	5
Change in amount and success of use since before the training.	1	2	3	4	5

4. Articulating clearly and confidently the WFP brand and its differentiation from "competitors."

	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Amount I have used	1	2	3	4	5
Success I've had in using	1	2	3	4	5
Change in amount and success of use since before the training.	1	2	3	4	5

5. Effectively representing WFP positions in discussions with stakeholders.

	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Amount I have used	1	2	3	4	5
Success I've had in using	1	2	3	4	5
Change in amount and success of use since before the training.	1	2	3	4	5

6. Advancing WFP interests in negotiations while maintaining key relationships.

	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Amount I have used	1	2	3	4	5
Success I've had in using	1	2	3	4	5
Change in amount and success of use since before the training.	1	2	3	4	5

7. Developing specific relationship strategy and action plan.

	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Amount I have used	1	2	3	4	5
Success I've had in using	1	2	3	4	5
Change in amount and success of use since before the training.	1	2	3	4	5

8. Utilizing relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high value relationships with WFP partners, donors, etc.

	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Amount I have used	1	2	3	4	5
Success I've had in using	1	2	3	4	5
Change in amount and success of use since before the training.	1	2	3	4	5

9. Motivating staff to improve efficiency and implement WFP strategic plan.

	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high
Amount I have used	1	2	3	4	5
Success I've had in using	1	2	3	4	5
Change in amount and success of use since before the training.	1	2	3	4	5

10. Please describe ways that you have used the learnings from the Leading Confidently training.

Appendix C
Six-Month Delayed Interview

Leading Confidently (6-month post-training survey)

The questions below are a part of a structured interview process to ascertain the impact of the leading confidently training program that you participated in approximately 6 months ago. Participation in the interview process is voluntary and all data will be kept confidential and only shared in the aggregate. In addition to being used in the organization, data will also be used in completion of a research project as part of thesis requirement at Pepperdine University. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Gina Paone, Chief, Learning and Performance Branch at Gina.Paone@wfp.org or Dr. Ann Feyerherm, research advisor at Pepperdine University at afeyerhe@pepperdine.edu or Dr. Doug Leigh, chair of the Pepperdine University Institutional Research Board, dleigh@pepperdine.edu

1. For which of the following areas can you name concrete situations in which you applied learnings from the Leading Confidently training?

- 1) Structuring and composing clear, concise, focused, and impactful documents and presentations (e.g., Exec Brief)
- 2) Comfortably handling difficult questions
- 3) Effectively and confidently communicating WFP message.
- 4) Articulating clearly and confidently the WFP brand and its differentiation from "competitors"
- 5) Effectively representing WFP positions in discussions with stakeholders
- 6) Advancing WFP interests in negotiations while maintaining key relationships
- 7) Developing specific relationship strategy and action plan
- 8) Utilizing relationship strategy and action plan to create and strengthen long-term, high value relationships with WFP partners, donors, etc.
- 9) Motivating staff to improve efficiency and implement WFP Strategic Plan

2. And for which of those did the application of the learnings positively influence the outcome in these situations?

3. How? – please describe

4. What are your future plans to build on the learnings of the training?

5. Please rate your agreement with the following

In retrospect, I would describe the training as...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
... relevant to my work at WFP					
... important to my own success					
... a source of new information					
... useful for successful Strategic Plan implementation					

6. Do you have further comments for us?

7. Name

8. Current position

9. Position at time of training