

GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

FOR BOTH PRESENT AND THOSE ALL IMPORTANT FUTURE LEADERS



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INTRODUCTION

Many business leaders don't feel they've done enough to build a solid pipeline of employees who could step in and take over when needed. Have you?

Imagine this scenario:

Three of your managers are planning to retire this year. Another just announced that she won't be returning after maternity leave, and another is considering moving to part-time. Are you prepared to fill those voids with ready-now capable leaders? Or would you be forced to compromise in order to fill the void, perhaps with people who aren't prepared to step into a leadership role? Would your new leaders be expected to "pick it up as they go" and "learn on the job"? If so, it's entirely possible that productivity and morale will take a hit during the new leaders' trial-and-error period.

However, if you groom employees from very early on to be leaders—home-grown leaders who know the business, the industry, and what it takes to succeed—and who have also built up critical leadership skills through ongoing, practical training, there will always be someone well-equipped to step into a new leadership role. That in and of itself is one of the most important reasons to invest in leadership training.

Just remember that great leaders aren't born—they grow—and your organization can be full of great leaders.

This is why many organizations have begun allocating budget resources to leadership training and development, but how do you guarantee that the training you choose will actually bring about change?

First, as with any business initiative, setting specific goals early on is important, because goals set the direction for the training. Second, leaders exist throughout the organization, not just in the C-suite, so it's important to pinpoint the level of leadership that you're aiming to improve or build, as the skills that a C-suite leader needs are significantly different from those of a department manager. Third, you should also become familiar with the pros and cons of traditional leadership training and development formats and methods. Although you're likely familiar with typical methods of delivery, such as lectures or eLearning, it's crucial to know the strengths and limitations of each of these formats.

You should understand, regardless of the method, what elements the leadership development program you ultimately choose should contain.

In this guide, we provide a comprehensive look at all of this in order to help you choose the most effective leadership training and development program.



ESTABLISHING SPECIFIC GOALS

Having a vision for developing leaders who drive growth, inspire others, and ultimately lead themselves and others to success is great, but this vision won't become a reality without establishing specific goals. The vision must be translated into a series of goals that are:

- **PRECISE:** They have a specific deadline—not a fuzzy one, but a deadlly accurate one.
- **MEASURABLE:** There's some way to measure the outcome.
- **CRYSTAL-CLEAR:** They're expressed so simply and so clearly that they're truly clear to everyone.
- **ACTION-ORIENTED:** They're action-oriented, not simply expressions of intent or desire.

With these qualities attached to your leadership development goals, you can have confidence that your vision for extraordinary leaders will happen; but how can something as abstract as leadership skills be specific or measured? In order to illustrate how it's possible, let's look at an example.

CLIENT: A GLOBAL QUICK SERVICE RESTAURANT

CLIENT REQUIREMENTS

- Improve employee engagement, and as a result the guest experience and profitability across the franchise network
- Customize, design, and deliver the approach in a 10 month period for immediate results

INITIAL AUDIENCE

- 2,200 Owner-operated restaurants
- 15,500 employees from owners to in-restaurant leadership



EAGLE'S FLIGHT APPROACH

- Conducted 3 months of restaurant and industry research
- Presented findings and requirements to CEO, COO, and Ownership Committee (selected owners from the franchise network)
- Delivered pre-launch "Owner's Conference", allowing all owners to experience and appreciate the power of Eagle's Flight's experiential learning approach
- Customized 6 days of leadership training
 - Content and methodology focused on 24 key leadership principles identified from the research
 - One training day delivered every six weeks, including retention and consistent reinforcement of learning
 - Hired, trained, and deployed 30 dedicated facilitators
 - 95,000 training days delivered within 10 month period

TOOLS PROVIDED

- Developed, produced, and translated all materials required for completion of the six days of leadership development training
- Customized content for client specific relevance and application
- Created supporting reinforcement materials for application at restaurant level
- Used and created videos designed to introduce and compliment leadership content
- Managed online registration process for individual restaurant participants
- Managed online enrollment system for scheduling of 95,000 training days within a 10 month period
- Designed and maintained online portal for all program-related communication and information
- Managed online community for shared Q&A/best practices
- Managed post-course knowledge retention and reinforcement activities

CLIENT INVOLVEMENT

- Executive Leadership involved in discussions around approach and key deliverables
- Corporate staff involved throughout to enhance relevance



UNDERSTANDING WHERE LEADERS LEAD

A good leader brings out the best in employees.

A bad leader brings out the worst.



Even if bad leaders—despite their shortcomings—manage to hit their goals and produce the kind of results that are expected of them, it’s rarely an easy or desirable path to success, and never a reflection of what’s truly possible. Bad leaders breed mistrust, unhealthy conflict, and high turnover. As a result, employees, the work product, and the overall culture suffer.

Fortunately, “bad” leaders are often not “bad individuals” but rather “untrained leaders” whose relatively poor performance is a byproduct of lack of training and coaching. Too many organizations promote employees into critical management positions without equipping them with all the skills needed to lead. So even people with the best intentions can fail as leaders. This is why leadership training is so critical in the workplace. However leadership development shouldn’t be reserved only for those called to officially lead, but also for those high potentials marked for future leadership roles. Thus, it’s important to understand the different levels at which leadership can occur. Eagle’s Flight’s [Journey of Leadership](#) puts these into three levels: Personal Leadership, Practical Leadership, and Living Leadership.

PERSONAL LEADERSHIP

(Front-Line Employees with No Direct Reports)

DEVELOPING SKILLS IN:

- Building effective work relationships
- Time management
- Communicating and listening effectively
- Understanding groups versus teams
- Managing conflict at work
- Understanding and managing stress



PRACTICAL LEADERSHIP

(Front-Line and Mid-Level Managers and Supervisors)

DEVELOPING SKILLS IN:

- Creating a culture of accountability
- Maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency of managing time
- Building and leading teams
- Coaching for results



LIVING LEADERSHIP

(Senior Leaders and Their Management Team)

DEVELOPING COMPETENCIES IN:

- Understanding and applying a leadership mindset
- Coaching and modeling to achieve results
- Engaging and empowering the workforce
- Mastering communication one on one or in a team or large group setting
- Mastering organizational communication
- Building strategies through proper planning and execution
- Applying skills to maximize productivity through times of change and growth



PROGRAMS THAT NAVIGATE TO SUCCESS

While you now understand the level of leadership where development can be addressed, we have yet to discover the “how” of a program. A great program takes into account the “how”, that is the format in which the program is delivered, such as eLearning or one-on-one (discussed further in the section), but the medium isn’t the most important part of navigating to successful results.

*The format is the ship sailing to the new world,
but a ship without a compass for navigation would be lost at sea.*

The following elements are key to ensuring that, regardless of the format, your leadership development efforts lead to success, and so should all be included in any development initiative.



- **Behavior change occurs, can be seen, and can be sustained.**
- **Knowledge acquired can be measured or tested.**
- **Competence against predetermined standards improves.**
- **Both understanding and conviction are increased.**

Assessing initial behavior and knowledge is key to determining the future impact of the training, as well as providing insight on how much of the information has been sustained over time. However, assessment and measurement alone cannot change an individual, so it’s also critical that the participant fully engages in the leadership development initiative. You could build the best program in the world, but if participants don’t see the value, they won’t be invested in making a change in their own knowledge and behavior.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR OPTIONS FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

There are many options when it comes to leadership training, ranging in format, cost, and benefits. This chart will offer insight on some of the more traditional options that organizations rely on.

BOOKS AND MANUALS

PROS:

- Low cost
- Focused subject matter
- Time-tested leadership advice

CONS:

- No interaction
- Learners are on their own
- Hard to assess knowledge gain

WEBINARS

PROS:

- Easy, simple way to share information
- Little technical skill required
- Content can be accessed later

CONS:

- Passive learning
- Lack of interaction
- One-and-done learning
- Hard to maintain engagement

eLEARNING

PROS:

- Flexible
- Learners go at their own pace
- No travel is required
- Learners gain information in real time
- Some insight into real-world application

CONS:

- No structure
- Lack of interaction
- Doesn't offer a hands-on approach
- It can get expensive

KEYNOTE SPEECHES, LECTURES, AND SEMINARS

PROS:

- Can offer the wow factor
- Lessons from successful people can sink in
- Execution is simple on your end

CONS:

- Often very expensive
- Passive learning
- No interaction
- Real-world application often doesn't apply

BEYOND TRADITIONAL TRAINING FORMATS

Great leadership certainly isn't mastered from a seat in the audience at a seminar or in a corner office when viewing an eLearning module. Leadership skills are truly honed through practical application when interacting with others well after the training has occurred, which is why most leadership development programs are minimally effective at producing long-term results. They typically focus on presenting information and expecting that information to be retained and successfully applied later when on the job; however, as early as one week after training the retention of information drops off considerably, and the impact fades before the learning can become habitual and beneficial to the organization.

If you truly want to change employees in order for them to become great leaders, you have to go beyond the out-of-the-box approach that most organizations take.

Mastering any kind of skill, whether it's leadership or a new hobby, requires multiple and consistent experiences of success. With enough time to work on the new skill, knowledge, or behavior, we develop a sense of mastery with the learning so that we grow to believe that we have the capability to succeed. You can't get this with most traditional leadership training programs, which is why one of the most effective approaches you can choose for leadership development utilizes experiential learning.

Experiential learning lets participants learn by doing. It serves to build conviction, and provides a platform for leaders to learn in a safe environment, yet one that mirrors their real world. With an effective debrief it is immediately transferable to the workplace. It creates such powerful learning because it transfers back to the job immediately.





EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THAT'S DESIGNED BRILLIANTLY WILL:

1. Replicate the business environment in a practical way. We learn how to do our jobs better by applying the principles learned in the experience in our own work.
2. Lead to a meaningful and intended learning outcome. It draws out specific business learning in a predictable and repeatable way.
3. Engage and create excitement! The fact that we are learning is almost hidden by the fact that we're enthralled with the experience.

As opposed to traditional learning, experiential learning helps build an understanding through actually experiencing the principle or idea being taught. It's an excellent way to build great leadership skills. Since it can be customized it's also important to build a program that meets the unique needs of your organization.


LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN ACTION

Now, perhaps more than ever, leadership skills are critical for the workplace—at every level, in every department, across the entire organization. It's up to you to offer training that can bring out the full leadership potential in every employee.

Eagle's Flight can help you do that. Our focus is to bring about transformation, where people are inspired to do their jobs better and to lead more effectively. We've been offering corporate training that delivers results for nearly three decades, and in that time, we've worked with a wide variety of organizations, including more than 50 percent of the Fortune 500.

Our clients span industries from automotive, agriculture, food/beverage, and hospitality to finance, pharmaceuticals, mining, and energy.

[Contact us](#) today and learn how our training and guaranteed outcomes can transform your organization.



Learn more about practical
leadership for your organization.

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