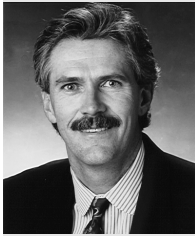


"Nothing is so well learned as that which is discovered." - Socrates

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Welcome



The nineties have offered a plethora of models and theories about organizational change and improvement. Depending upon our cognitive preferences and views of the world, we've had choices that range from chaos theory and open systems modeling to

human performance technology and the balanced scorecard. We are seeing organizations from an internal perspective, focus more on measurable outcomes and accountability. Externally, they are pressed to deliver more customized products and services with shorter lifecycles and quicker turnaround. Organizations are experimenting and struggling with the best structures and processes for meeting these demands in an environment where long-term strategy might mean six months. At Discovery Learning we are interested in the implications of the business environment on the training of leaders and managers.

We asked two experts in the field to share their thoughts on the leading trends in leadership development. In our feature article for this edition of Excursions you'll read what they have to say. As I reviewed their comments, it seemed they could be grouped into three categories; program content, program outcomes and learning processes.

The content includes emerging topics, both in terms of awareness and skill. Topics such as change, organizational culture, globalization, social capacity and workplace diversity. The outcomes focus on program accountability and transfer of learning. How do we know this training effort had the desired impact on the participants? How do we know this organization is a healthier place as a result of the resources and time spent on this development effort? And last, learning processes includes newer processes such as post-program coaching and learning support teams and familiar processes, such as experiential learning and assessments with a new twist. I hope you find this issue of Excursions useful and thought provoking.

Chris Musselwhite, President

Leading Trends

Article and interviews by Randell Jones

Recent conversations with Cresencio Torres of the San Diego branch of the Center of Creative Leadership (CCL) and Linda Dillon Jones of the Center for Training and Education at Johns Hopkins University provide valuable perspectives on the changes taking place in the field of leadership development.

“New and improved.” Those are the words that really get our attention in the American marketplace, whether they're used

to sell soap, Subarus or software. Those words remind us of the importance and the value our society places on innovation and creativity as well as the expectations we have for change. For those reasons, organization and business leaders are frequently searching to discover the newest and latest trends in matters that can give them and their organizations a competitive edge. That is no less true in the field of leadership development where organizations want to be abreast of emerging thinking and changes that can affect how they lead and grow their organizations to fulfill their corporate visions.

“Self-awareness is still the key to understanding leadership.”

- Cresencio Torres

“The emerging emphasis in leadership development today is on ‘take-aways,’” Torres explains, “That's the new learning individuals acquire in this training that they can use in fairly short order to have an impact on their organizations.” Leadership programs create “take-away” value (or “transferred learning”) by making the learning outcomes more explicit. That includes having program participants arrive with a list of leadership issues in mind that will benefit their organizations through their management roles and then having participants create a detailed personal leadership development plan that addresses those issues.

Jones agrees that the transfer of learning from the classroom to the job is key to leadership development. To solidify a program's impact on a participant's organizational goals, she uses follow-up with each participant in a series of post-program contacts to encourage commitment of new learning in work settings. Her group

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A Closer Look

Recently incorporated into the design of the Center for Creative Leadership's Development Program (LDP), Discovery Learning's Change Style Indicator (CSI) is a self-assessment instrument designed to measure preferred style in approaching change and dealing with situations involving change. An individual's score falls along a change style continuum ranging from a Conserver style, preferring gradual but continuous approach to change to and Originator style, preferring a quicker more radical approach to change. A third style, the Pragmatist, occupies the middle range of the continuum; people with this style are characterized as reasonable, practical, agreeable, and flexible.

The CSI helps people understand their own approach to change, appreciate the value of other approaches and helps groups facing change work more effectively together. Carl Bryant, the Center for Creative Leadership's Vice President for Assessment says the CSI is "The most effective instrument I know of for helping people understand how they prefer to manage change."



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added a coaching component to one of its programs just this year specifically to help participants focus on the goals set out in each participant's personal learning plan. She adds, "coaching coupled with the continuing use of peer support groups formed during the training programs has been a very exciting and important change to our program. Both methods help participants take their leadership lessons into their jobs."

Experiential learning continues to be an important component of both old and new leadership programs. Jones notes that Discovery Learning's Paper Planes, Inc. simulation has helped her program participants through experiential learning to see how their roles as individuals can affect the group's output directly. "In such a decentralized organization," she says, "people can sometimes lose sight of how they are connected to the bigger scheme of things." Torres agrees and cites CCL's emphasis on experiential learning as a powerful and effective way to educate participants about their leadership. He sees this approach as being in concert with the current thinking and best practices of the industry. The underlying educational philosophy of experiential learning is that given the proper circumstances and stimulus, bright people will uncover for themselves information about their belief systems and behaviors that are affecting their leadership. A seminar setting creates an environment conducive to these self-discoveries and specific training processes allow participants to realize personal insight. With reflection, participants come to their own conclusions; and, that is at the heart of experiential learning.

Creating and managing change is another important issue being emphasized today in leadership development. People have different styles and preferences for change. Effective leaders understand this and know that their organizations will include originators eager to launch radically new ideas about how to do things. They also know they will have conservers who favor incremental improvements to existing structures. Torres notes, "in CCL's flagship

program, the Leadership Development Program, we are asking participants not only to be aware of change style preferences, but to look at how their preferences might impact their leadership style and create conflict and collaboration with co-workers."

"Despite all the new developments in leadership training, self-awareness is still the key to understanding leadership," declares Torres. "The foundation of any leadership development program is understanding self, understanding self in relation to others and understanding self in the context of the organization," he says. With regard to that last item, some leadership programs at CCL now include a focus on organizational culture and acknowledge recent research that shows a direct link between measures of organizational culture and measures of the financial performance of organizations.

"But beyond self, team and organization, another level of awareness is emerging as an important leadership issue," Torres adds, "and that is an awareness around the issue of globalization. Successful leaders in the international arena have what I call social capacity - an ability to connect with others that cuts across languages and cultures. These individuals know how others think and they understand how systems work." The issue of social capacity in leadership is in its infancy, but many believe as Torres does that successful leaders in the global community have abilities to do things beyond what domestic leaders do. "We are still exploring this issue, but it's there," says Torres, "and it will become increasingly important in the years ahead."

Jones adds "diversity" to the list of current and coming issues in leadership. Johns Hopkins University is a microcosm of the world reflecting broadly the various nations, ethnic groups and dimensions of diversity that compose a global society. She says, "We are a diverse community of international students and international faculty. We want an environment that not only supports our cultural diversity and builds inclusion, but one that celebrates all

the differences that define who we are. In fact, the feedback we receive on our leadership training tells us that people recognize our diversity. They particularly, value the experience of meeting people from all across the campus who are involved in other aspects of the university.”

After identifying several emerging issues that are shaping how leaders are developed, Torres observes, “Too often people are out there looking for the ‘latest thing’ just because it's new. But, you know, sometimes I don't think there's anything really new in the world. I think we just sometimes forget what we already know. Being successful, being able to lead, being able to function and to manage an organization, being able to work with people is really pretty basic stuff. It's about understanding self and self in relationship to others. Regardless of where

we go in history, we can see that the individuals who were successful weren't tyrannical; they weren't demigods. They weren't mentally unhealthy folks. They were perhaps unique in their time yet they all preached the same basic messages; know who you are, respect others and develop healthy relationships. That advice hasn't changed over the last few thousand years, and it'll be good advice tomorrow as well.”

As the recent experiences of the Center for Training and Education of Johns Hopkins University and the Center for Creative Leadership demonstrate, the challenge in leadership development today appears to be the task of remembering what we already know about what works and what doesn't and then helping others learn those lessons in creative, powerful and effective ways. ●

Tricks of the Trade

Contributed by Linda Lemar, Vice President Training & Development, Discovery Learning , Inc.

It sure is amazing to continually hear stories of those attending various and sundry executive learning sessions with no real "jewel of learning and growth" to share and celebrate over time.

How does a trainer make sure that the concepts that they blend into context touch the present state of the learner's awareness and become reinforced ensuring future value-add for both the individual and the organization?

I would suggest that the trainer use a recipe of content, assessments, active listening and questioning, a blend of experiential learning, topped off with a "goal setting" technique that will indeed provide practice, continual learning and reinforcement. The following design thread is for the trainer wishing to reinforce the concept of learning "take aways":

STEP 1 Create a safe place permitting self-awareness to occur (e.g., reflection time and learning journals).

STEP 2 Allow time toward the close of the session for the individual to reflect, articulate and share their goals (e.g., learning journals, 3x5 cards, forms with a copy for the coach, trainer or change partner, etc.). Research indicates that the number of goals should be five or below.

STEP 3 Demonstrate reinforcement methods for enhanced goal attainment (e.g., follow-up methods, phone, electronic mail, assessments, individual learning journals, external executive coaching, change partners within the class or within their organization, etc.)

Goal setting techniques can certainly provide the means for the individual's take-aways to become living and breathing parts of the individual's and organization's future learning and growth systems.

What's new at DLI?

Discovery Learning is on the web, come visit us at www.discoverylearning.net (while you're there register to receive Discovery Learning updates electronically). The site contains information about all of our products, sample reports for the Denison Organizational Culture and Leadership Survey and electronic versions of Excursions past and present. In the future, visitors to the site will be able to download current normative data on all of our tools.

New software is available for the Change Style Indicator. The instrument is still self scoring but now trainers and con-

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sultants have the ability to build client databases, create composite reports, and print our personalized individual reports with three paragraph micro-descriptors. The software comes with all new facilitator guides and is available free of charge to trainers with old versions of the facilitator guide.

Updated software for the GoalGetter Personal Performance system has been developed and is also available free of charge to trainers or organizations using the old GoalGetter software.

Growing, growing. We are pleased to announce the addition of two new members to the Discovery Learning team: Linda Lemar joins us as our new Vice President of Training and Development. Linda's management and consulting experience should prove invaluable as we continue to grow. Donna Kelly joins us as our in-house director of assessment scoring. Donna is primarily responsible for scoring our GoalGetter reports, the Denison Culture and Leadership Surveys.

Train the Trainer

Discovery Learning will be offering the second and last Train the Trainer session for 1999. The session will be held in Greensboro, NC on September 1-3. Interested Trainers can receive certification in Paper Planes, Inc., Change Style Indicator, GoalGetter, Denison Organizational Culture and Leadership Surveys. All seats were filled for our February '99 session and response to our September '99 session has been strong. For more information, call 1.800.851.5118.

Next Edition

No industry is experiencing faster, more radical change than America's Healthcare industry. Hospitals and Healthcare organizations are merging at rapid rates hoping to reap the benefits of large economies of scale. Physicians disturbed by what they see as intrusions into their practices by managed care are looking into forming Physician's Unions.

What Leadership skills are needed to guide America's Healthcare organizations successfully through the era of change? How are the needed Leadership skills being developed? In the Fall edition of Excursions we will discuss these and other issues with two experts in the field.

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