

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE LEADERS

A Seven-Step Exercise for the Leadership Team



root[®]

Imagine a version of your organization that executes better, faster, and more consistently.

Picture leaders who are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and have clarity around the kind of leader they want to be and need to be. They will be:

- More adaptable to change
- Better able to connect with their teams
- Able to connect their teams to the larger goals with a sense of passion and meaning
- Able to break down silos that are holding the company back

Developing great leaders increases your odds of successful execution. Follow this seven-step worksheet to get everyone on the same page about what your team needs to develop great leaders.



1. Link leadership to strategy.

This tie is crucial for any successful leadership development to take place. This lens needs to look at what's required for the organization today and where it is headed.

- a. Which behaviors are required for effective leadership in your organization?

- b. In a sentence, describe how these relate to the overall company strategy.

- c. What are you doing to help your leaders recognize where the world is going and how that affects your business (think: evolving customer expectations, demographic trends, regulatory influences, and the competitive environment)?

- d. How do you enable them to link those trends to the strategy of the company?

- e. How do you communicate what evolution in behaviors and skills is required to lead effectively in that environment?

3. Assess where leaders' capabilities are in relation to the company's future objectives.

It's important to determine what you need as you build the company of the future. Start by identifying where your leaders are today.

a. Describe your current reality with regard to your leaders.

b. In three sentences, describe the delta between where your leaders and organization are today and where you want to be.

c. What steps can and will you take to close that gap?

d. What resources or tools will be required to help you do so?

4. Create a customized approach relevant to your leaders.

Leaders are seasoned and smart. One-way lecturing and packaged content will not do the trick for them. You've got to think bigger.

a. What are the most important things your leaders should gain from your development program?

b. How can you best foster an interactive environment of two-way conversation?

c. What tactics can you use in a program to keep engagement levels high (think: peer-to-peer, case studies, simulations, etc.)?

d. How will you know if the program worked with your people?

5. Start at the top.

Test your program at the highest levels of the organization first. When this group is the pilot group, they take ownership in a way that will help drive engagement and adoption for the rest of the leaders who participate.

a. Who from the top of the company should participate in the pilot of the program?

b. Who will administer/teach the program?

c. How will you capture their feedback?

d. How will you incorporate their feedback?

e. How will you equip the pilot group to then lead by example, championing the program to others?

6. Pilot with the target audience.

Now the rubber meets the leadership development road. Create a pilot group for a trial run with the actual target audience.

a. Who from the target audience should participate in the pilot of the program?

b. Who will administer/teach the program?

c. How will you capture their feedback?

d. How will you incorporate their feedback?

e. How will you equip this pilot group to champion the program to their colleagues for the larger rollout?

7. Make it a process, not an event.

Developing leaders is an ongoing process, which requires an ongoing commitment from the company.

- a. How will you demonstrate that the company is committed to developing leaders on an ongoing basis?
- b. How can you incorporate specific assignments or work projects for people to practice and apply the skills they've learned?
- c. How can you create mentorship between people going through the program and senior leaders in the business to promote feedback and coaching?
- d. What opportunities will you create for ongoing learning?
- e. Where does all of this fit with your performance review processes?
- f. Describe how and how often you will celebrate successes to create a culture that supports leadership development.