Turning Your Organization Into a Leadership Talent Factor

Paul Tesluk
Donald S. Carmichael Professor of Organizational Behavior

Smart Business Practices Seminar
Sponsored by the School of Management Alumni Association
December 11, 2013
Jack Welch

I am often asked if leaders are born or made. The answer, of course, is both. Some characteristics, like IQ and energy, seem to come with the package. On the other hand, you learn some confidence, at your mother's knee, and at sports. And you learn others at work—trying and learning from it, or getting it right and doing it again, only better.

“As a manager, you’ve got to be nurturing flowers all the time—done right, companies will end up with magnificent gardens.”

Jack Welch

# Google’s Project Oxygen

D. Gavin (December 2013), How Google Sold Its Engineers on Management, *HBR*, Reprint R1312D

The Oxygen Eight Behaviors for Great Managers

...and how Googlers explain them

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Be a good coach</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Empower the team and do not micromanage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“He caters to your skillset and personality with his guidance and feedback and pushes you to grow while still making you feel strongly supported.”</td>
<td></td>
<td>“I like the trust my manager gives me and my team... There is no micromanaging... Yet we know that he is there to answer our questions/guide us if need be.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Express interest/concern for team members’ success &amp; personal well-being</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Be productive and results-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“He is incredibly authentic, credible, and caring, and manages to do a brilliant job ensuring our team members achieve their goals, while ensuring everyone on the team also feels valuable.”</td>
<td></td>
<td>“He is relentless in removing obstacles on the team. He created a concept called “RUSH,” where any decision that needs to get made, gets made quickly. Meetings begin on time and end on time, always.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Be a good communicator</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Help with career development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“My manager encourages an extremely open dialogue that permits us to share issues and concerns that, in most organizations, would be concealed.”</td>
<td></td>
<td>“I tell them career development isn’t about just being promoted, it’s about growing, acquiring, sharing expertise.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Have a vision</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Use your technical skills to advise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Her team is the only team I’ve been on at Google in which we’ve taken the time to collaboratively create a vision, and then to share and act on that vision with relevant teams. I felt part of an important effort.”</td>
<td></td>
<td>“He has deep knowledge of our infrastructure. He is a hands-on guy and willing to roll up his sleeves and get to the bottom of the problem.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Link to article](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/13/business/13hire.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)
Morning Star
Leadership Development

• Critical for enabling innovation and change
• Significant organizational investment, but:
  • Majority of investment devoted to formal off-the-job activities (training, coursework, assessments)
  • that investment that is typically tied to business cycle
• Majority of leadership development comes from informal, on-the-job experiences
70-20-10 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Informal, on the job, experience-based and practice

Coaching, mentoring and development through others

Formal learning interventions and structured workshops
70-20-10 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT MODEL

How People Tend to Write Development Plans

- Courses and Reading 70%
- Learning from Others 20%
- Job Experiences 10%

How People Actually Develop

- Courses/Reading 10%
- Learning from Others 20%
- Job Experiences 70%
Objectives

• Understand the trends in leadership development
• Develop a framework for an experience-based approach to developing leadership talent
• Learn to identify the developmental components of rich learning experiences
• Recognize how to identify managers who will gain the most from developmental experiences
• Learn how to integrate developmental experiences into a comprehensive leadership development effort
Keys to Leadership Development

Van Velsor, McCauley, & Moxley (1998)
Developmental Experiences

• Formal leadership development interventions
  – 360-degree feedback
  – Assessment centers
  – Training
  – Action learning
  – Formal mentoring
  – Executive coaching

• Developmental relationships

• Hardships

• Work experience in the form of job assignments
   Job assignments contribute to the majority of managerial learning and development
   a study by the Corporate Leadership Council that concluded that on-the-job learning has three times more impact on employee performance than formal training

McCauley (2001); Wick & Leon (1993); McCall et al. (1988)

The Corporate Leadership Council Human Resources.
Developmental Work Experiences

Creating Change
- Developing new directions
- Inherited Problems
- Problems with Employees

High Level Responsibilities
- Visibility with Sr. management
- Assignment Pressure
- Broad Scale & scope

Unfamiliar Responsibilities
- Job Transitions

Managing Diversity
- Working across Cultures
- Managing work Group diversity

Managing Interfaces
- Handling External Pressures
- Influencing Without Authority

Developmental Challenge
- Motivate leaders to think creatively
- Require new behaviors to be successful
- Encourage insight by adapting to roles in meaningful ways

• Motivate leaders to think creatively
• Require new behaviors to be successful
• Encourage insight by adapting to roles in meaningful ways

McCall et al. (1988); McCauley et al. (1994)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental Work Experiences</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfamiliar responsibilities</td>
<td>Must handle novel responsibilities</td>
<td>• Experience a major change in one’s work/role/position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating Change</td>
<td>Create and facilitate change in the way business is conducted or in an employee’s behavior, or fix a preexisting problem</td>
<td>• Manage a new product launch or acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Manage subordinate performance problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Deal with inherited morale problems in a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High levels of responsibility</td>
<td>Lead initiatives that are highly important to the organization and entail multiple functions, groups, or products/services</td>
<td>• Secure financing for a key acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Negotiate with a large customer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Assume responsibility for a organization-wide initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing interfaces</td>
<td>Influence/manage people or processes for which one has no direct authority</td>
<td>• Convince upper management to support a proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Manage key interactions with a union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing diversity</td>
<td>Lead people from different cultures, gender, or racial or ethnic groups</td>
<td>• Lead a team dispersed across several continents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Lead a team with extensive gender and cultural diversity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DeRue & Wellman (2009)
### Developmental Components of Work Experience

There are 55 Questions in this block. The first 28 are on this page.

How well does each statement describe something you face in the job you have now? Using the scale to the right, please select the appropriate circle for each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>You have to carry out a major reorganization, for example, as a result of a merger, acquisition, downsizing, or rapid growth.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>You have to make major strategic changes in the business--its direction, structure, technology systems, or operations.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>You are trying something the organization has never tried before--no one knows for sure how to do it or how it will come out.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Your job includes launching new organizational ventures (e.g., new product lines, acquisitions, new functions or groups, new plans or concepts, or new facilities).</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>You have to create or establish new policies or procedures.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>You inherited widespread morale problems.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 CA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On-Line Assessment & Feedback

- Top-level findings, tailored feedback with benchmarking
- Feedback interpretation, Action plan

Guidelines for Using Your Feedback Report

1. Familiarize Yourself with the Report and Description of the Dimensions
   - Read over your report along with the descriptions to become familiar with the dimensions.
   - Use the model provided as a framework for understanding the feedback.

2. Interpret Your Report
   - Use the average scores provided only as a general point of comparison — remember that everyone’s work experiences and circumstances are unique.
   - Consider whether the scores are providing an accurate indication of your current job or yourself on each dimension — where you see inconsistencies think through possible explanations (e.g., your interpretation of the questions, in responding to questions you used as a reference point a more generalized set of work experiences).

3. Ask Yourself What This Tells You About How Your Job Is Contributing To Your Development
   - Use the work experience model to think about the ways in which your current work experiences and your approach to your job are influencing your development and...
Research Findings of Developmental Work Experiences

• Studies of large samples of early-career managers and sr executives across a range of organizations and industries


Limits of Developmental Challenge

Leadership Skill Development

Overall Developmental Challenge

DeRue & Wellman (2009)
Learning Goal Orientation

• Seek opportunities for developing skills
• Adaptable and flexible
• Can learn from mistakes
• Seek and reflect on developmental feedback

Dweck, (1986); Elliott & Church (1997); Button et al., (1996); VandeWalle (1996, 1997)
Accessing Developmental Assignments

Overall Developmental Challenge of Assignment

High Levels of Access

Low Levels of Access

Learning Goal Orientation

Low

High

0.6

0.5

0.4

0.3

0.2

0.1

0

-0.1

-0.2

-0.3

-0.4

-0.5
Importance of Developmental Feedback

Leadership Skill Development

Overall Developmental Challenge

High Feedback Availability

Low Feedback Availability

DeRue & Wellman (2009)
Manager Characteristics

- Learning Orientation
  - seek opportunities for developing skills
  - adaptable and flexible
  - learn from mistakes
  - seek developmental feedback

Career Support Factors
- Mentoring
- Feedback

Work Experiences Involving:
- High Level of Responsibility
- Creating Change
- Managing Interfaces
- Managing Diversity
- Job Transitions

Immediate Outcomes
- Motivation
- Learning
- Managerial Competencies

Long-Term Outcomes
- Career Success
- Performance
Culture That Supports Learning

• Provide for developmental experiences

• Support development though:
  – Leadership coaching
  – Development planning
  – Rewards
  – Succession planning
  – Tracking individual development

• Establish norms that emphasize learning
  – Learning as a necessary part of work
  – Feedback is a responsibility
  – Sr. executives have responsibility for over development

• Provide on-going coaching, mentoring & feedback
Mentoring & Coaching Roles

**Challenge**
- *Dialog partner:* provide perspectives or points of view different from one’s own
- *Assignment broker:* facilitate assess to challenging assignments (new jobs or additions to current one)
- *Accountant:* provide pressure to fulfill commitment to developmental goals
- *Role model:* provide examples of high competence in the areas being developed

**Assessment**
- *Feedback provider:* provide ongoing feedback as person works to learn and improve
- *Sounding board:* provide evaluation of strategies before they are implemented
- *Point of comparison:* provide standards for evaluating own level of skill or performance
- *Feedback interpreter:* provide assistance in integrating or making sense of feedback from others

**Support**
- *Counselor:* provide examination of what is making learning and development difficult
- *Cheerleader:* provide boost in one’s belief that success is possible
- *Reinforcer:* provide formal and informal rewards for progress toward goals
- *Cohort:* provide sense that the person is not alone in their struggles and that, if others can achieve their goals, they can too
Summary Conclusions

• Leadership competencies can be grown through specific types of developmental experiences
• Learning orientation important in determining who develops the most
• Implications for structuring assignments, selecting HIPOs, and mentoring/coaching to create a “leadership factory”
THANK YOU!

ptesluk@buffalo.edu
Table Exercise 1

Please make sure there are a mix of researchers and practitioners at your table

- **Practitioners:**
  - What does leadership development look like in your organization (e.g., formal vs. informal, type of investment)?
  - What are the biggest challenges to leadership development in your organization?
  - What trends have you seen in leadership development?

- **Researchers:**
  - For each of these questions, what does the research suggest?
Table Exercise 2

• Where have you seen developmental assignments be most helpful stimulating leadership development?
• What best practices have you seen in developing leadership talent using assignments?
• What are (or do you envision) are the most significant challenges in using assignments as a means to development leadership talent?