DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

1.1   CONCEPTOF DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

There are a number of broad skill areas that are particularly important for leaders. These include strategic thinking, planning and delivery, people management change management, communication, and persuasion and influencing.

1.   Strategic Thinking Skills: Creating a vision is not simply a matter of having an idea. Good strategic thinking must be based on evidence, and that means being able to gather and analyze information from a wide range of sources. This is not purely about numbers, but also about knowing and understanding your market and your customers, and then and this is crucial using that information to support your strategic decisions.

2   Planning and Deliver/ Skills: Alongside strategic thinking therefore, go organizing and action planning, both essential for delivery of your vision and strategy. Project management and project planning are also helpful skills for both managers and leaders. Good risk management is also important to help you avoid things going wrong, and manage when they do. Good leaders also often have very strong facilitation skills, to manage groups effectively. Leaders also need to be able to make good decisions in support of their strategy delivery, and solve problems. With a positive attitude, problems can become opportunities and learning experiences and a leader can gain much information from a problem addressed.

3.   People Management Skills: In particular, leaders are expected to motivate and encourage their followers, both directly (see our page on Motivating others) and by Creating a Motivational Environment. One

of the first skills that new leaders need to master is how to delegate. This is a difficult skill for many people but, done well, delegation can give team members responsibility and a taste of leadership themselves, and help them to remain motivated. There are further challenges to delegating work within a team, including balancing workloads, and ensuring that everyone is given opportunities to help them develop. Leaders and managers both need to understand how to build and manage a team. They need to know how to recruit effectively, and bring people 'on board' through induction processes. They also need to understand the importance of performance management both on a regular basis, and to manage poor performance.

4. Change Management and Innovation Skills: Change management may seem like an odd companion to people management and communication, but leadership is often particularly important at times of change. A leader needs to understand change management in order to lead an organization through the process. For example, change management requires the creation and communication of a compelling vision. It also requires the change to be driven forward firmly, and leadership to make it 'stick1 if the organization is not to revert within a very short period.

5. Communication Skills: While communication skills are important for everyone, leaders and managers perhaps need them even more. These skills are general interpersonal skills, not specific to leadership, but successful leaders tend to show high levels of skill when communicating. Good leaders tend to be extremely good listeners, able to listen actively and elicit information by good questioning.

They are also likely to show high levels of assertiveness, which enables them to make their point without aggression, but firmly. They know how to build rapport quickly and effectively, to develop good, strong relationships with others, whether peers or subordinates. These skills come together to help to build charisma, that quality of 'brightness' which makes people want to follow a leader.

6.   Persuasion and Influencing Skills; Finally, one particular area of communicating that is especially important for leaders is being able to persuade and influence others. Good leaders use a range of tools for this. Leaders also need tools to help them understand the way that others behave, and create positive interactions. As a first step, it may be helpful to understand more about emotional intelligence another vital quality for leaders to possess but there are a number of other tools that may also be useful, including Transactional Analysis, and Myers-Briggs Type Indicators.

1.2   LEADERSHIPTRAINING PROGRAM

A great way for managers at all levels to improve their ability to inspire and motivate individuals and teams to achieve outstanding business results is through leadership skills training. These kinds of training programs require the following;

•   Searching for innovative ways of developing and managing people.

•   Finding new business opportunities.

•   Tackling broader societal issues.

Benefits of Leadership Skills Training

1.   It will help increase your team's work productivity.

2.   It will help you raise future team leaders for the business organization.

3.   It will decrease employee turnover.

4.   It will increase employee engagement.

5.   It will improve your leadership styles.

6.   You will be able to make wiser decisions.

7.   You will learn better ways of influencing people.

8.   You will learn better ways to build a strong and united team.

9.   It will enhance basic communication skills.

10.   You will learn conflict management techniques.

11.   You will learn the art of negotiating effectively with people.

12.   You will gain more self-confidence in leading team.

13.   You will be able to interact with other leaders.

14.   You will be able to effectively formulate and implement leadership strategies.

15.   You will be able to create employee-friendly policies within the organization.

3.3   STEPS IN DESIGNING EFFECTIVE TRAINING

When properly executed, the program delivers a lean and fighting fit workforce, and an increase in production, sales and profit making your worries about employee turnover rate and on boarding costs a thing of the past.

But the catch is in the words "when properly executed". There are many things that can make a training and development program go awry. So how do you make sure that your program is not a sheer waste of organizational resources?

Follow these seven simple but effective steps to create successful training and development programs.

1.   **Assess Organizational Training & Development Needs:** You have a need and you want the training program to address that. It may be a

new product that requires a total revamping of the production line, or just want some changes to increase the output of an existing product. On both counts, you want employees to understand and adopt themselves to the new production flow and increase their in-line efficiency.

2. **Define Your Training Objective:** So defining this kind of training objective is the most important aspect of the program. It gives the program direction, and also serves as a yardstick to measure success. Put simply, the training will be judged as successful if your employees are able to successfully perform the tasks they were trained for.

In order for this to happen,

- The objective must be stated clearly and should make sense to everyone involved;
- It should be achievable;
- It should be relevant to the training; and
- It should be measurable.

3. **Training Program Design:** Have a road map of your plans ready before you put the same into action. A complete plan that includes learning and instructional methods, content matter, content flow and other such aspects.

- Design keeping in minds the needs of your employees, and not that of the trainer.
- Always create content around your training objective.
- Design using the training principles for adults.
- Introduce as many practical sessions as possible in the program.
- Design an interactive program. Introduce Q & A sessions.
- Break the sessions into short segments.

- Ensure proper flow and connect between the segments.

4. **Adopt Training Principles for Adults:** Remember that you are proposing to train adults. The training program has to factor in their unique learning characteristics. They:

- Are experienced, self-motivated and goal oriented;
- Prefer training that helps in their advancement;
- Prefer task oriented and relevant training programs; and
- Have pride in their industry knowledge that needs to be respected.

5. **Training Program Development:** Start developing on the design and create your training materials, training manuals, training notes for the instructor, PowerPoint presentations, charts, posters and other materials for hands-on practical sessions.

6. **Training Program Implementation:** This is where all the preparation that you have done so far will actually be rolled out. A few points to remember for effective implementation:

- Schedule training activities well in advance and mobilize the required resources;
- Decide the location for the program based on the size and kind of training rooms you need.

7. **Evaluate Your Training Program:** The last phase before you can sit back and relax. Evaluate the design and development of the program, the effectiveness of the program, and the degree of success achieved.

- **Employee Feedback:** Get employee feedback about the program. Was it informative, helpful, and riveting? Do they have any suggestions to make it better? Collecting this kind of feedback from employees who participate in training sessions will help you come up with new and improved program versions.

- **Employee Assessment:** This must be done during the training sessions. Evaluate how much employees have actually understood about the training. This can be done using mini quizzes, practical exercises, etc. In brief, you want to make sure they are aware of the training objecti ve and the process to achieve it.
- **Program Assessment:** After your trained employees report back to work, conduct on the job evaluation of the training program to measure its effectiveness in achieving the objectives.

3.4 SPECIAL TECHNIQUES OF LEADERSHIPTRAINING
3.4.1 BEHAVIOUR ROLE MODEL

Role modelling is a useful means to provide continuity and maintain high standards to be passed on to others. Explicit role modelling can be thought-provoking for the role model, too- it can help develop a guide to one's own behaviour. Role modelling consists of much more than other people observing and copying the role model. A role model should not require someone to mirror every aspect of them, there is scope for individuality. For example, to create a customer-centric organization, powerful role models help people to see how they personally should take time for the customer in lots of day-to-day ways. Customer friendly role models can be observed empathizing with the customer, taking personal responsibility and going the extra mile.

Leaders who are good role models not only pay attention to their individual acts; they encourage teamwork and cooperation, support others in their growth and development, and recognize the positive behaviours and

attitudes they display. A good role model will facilitate the kind of organisation where other people learn from each other and change over time.

Points for Successful Role Modelling

1. Self-reflection: Self-reflection is the first stage: what is it that you are modelling? How sound is it? Consider public behaviour but also behaviour outside the public gaze. Assess the current impact that role modelling is having.

2. Develop a clear view: What sort of role model is right for the individual, organization and external contacts? There is no single template of a role model applicable to all organizations.

3. Discuss and agree: If you want to foster a certain climate in your organization, discuss and agree the place of role modelling to promote defined skills, attitudes and behaviours.

4. Variety of role models: Look out for the variety of role models that exist and take account that they exist at all levels, not just at a managerial one. Consider diversity: if role modelling is at least in part about identifying with individuals, not everyone in a diverse workforce will identify with a white, middle-aged male manager.

5. Communicate expectations: Communicate with others what standards you expect, ensuring you consistently apply those standards. For example, praise behaviours you want to encourage, notice how consistent you are.

6. Walk the talk: Be mindful of how you represent your team to others; be consistent and talk positively about your team.

7. People skills: Be aware of and seek to develop people skills so that leaders are best able to use the opportunities for role modelling to coach, nurture and motivate others.

3.4.2 CASE DISCUSSION

Often, executives are surprised to discover that the objective of the case study is not to reach consensus, but to understand how different people use the same information to arrive at diverse conclusions. When you begin to understand the context you can appreciate the reasons why those decisions were made. You can prepare for case discussions in several ways.

1. **In self-reflection:** The time you spend here is deeply introspective. You're not only working with case materials and assignments, but also taking on the role of the case protagonist-the person who's supposed to make those tough decisions. How would you react in those situations? We put people in a variety of contexts, and they start by addressing that specific problem.

2. **In a small group setting:** The discussion group is a critical component of the HBS experience. You're working in close quarters with a group of seven or eight very accomplished peers in diverse functions, industries, and geographies. Because they bring unique experience to play you begin to see that there are many different ways to wrestle with a problem-and that's very enriching.

3. **In the classroom:** The faculty guides you in examining and resolving the issues-but the beauty here is that they don't provide you with the answers. You're interacting in the classroom with other executives-debating the issue, presenting new viewpoints, countering positions, and building on one another's ideas. And that leads to the next stage of learning.

4. **Beyond the classroom:** Once you leave the classroom, the learning continues and amplifies as you get to know people in different settings-over meals, at social gatherings, in the fitness center, or as

you are walking to class. You begin to distill the takeaways that you want to bring back and apply in your organization to ensure that the decisions you make will create more value for your firm.
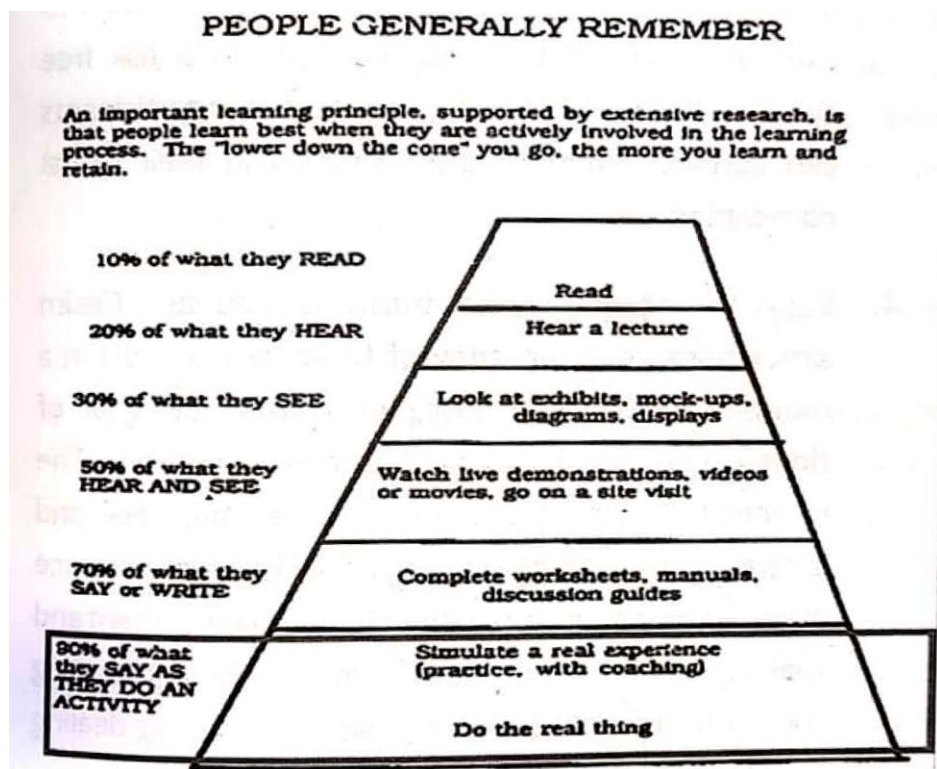
Case Study Best Practices

1- **Prepare:** The key to being an active listener and participant in case discussions-and to getting the most out of the learning experience-is thorough individual preparation.

Discuss: We've set aside formal time for you to discuss the case with your group. These sessions will help you to become more confident about sharing your views in the classroom discussion.

3. **Participate:** Actively express your views and challenge others. Don't be afraid to share related "war stories" that will heighten the relevance and enrich the discussion.

4. **Relate:** If the content doesn't seem to relate to your business, don't tune out. You can learn a lot about marketing insurance from a case on marketing razor blades!

5. **Apply:** Actively apply what you're learning to your own specific management situations, both past and future. This will magnify the relevance to your business.

6. **Note:** People with diverse backgrounds, experiences, skills, and styles will take away different things. Be sure to note what resonates with you, not your peers.

7. **Understand:** Being exposed to so many different approaches to a given situation will put you in a better position to enhance your management style,

3.43 BUSINESS GAMES ANDSIMULATION

A form of experiential or active learning: Collaboration, risk free business decision making, strategizing, and problem solving all form the building blocks of business simulator games, and they belong to the realm of experiential and active learning. The underlying principle of these, according to the Learning pyramid, is that 'learning by doing' is one of the most effective ways of retaining knowledge as it stimulate a real experience through an activity of practicing with coaching, comparing to other learning methods like reading, listening to a lecture, looking at visuals, watching live demonstrations, and completing written exercises.

PEOPLE GENERALLY REMEMBER

An important learning principle, supported by extensive research, is that people learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. The "lower down the cone" you go, the more you learn and retain.

10% of what they READ	Read
20% of what they HEAR	Hear a lecture
30% of what they SEE	Look at exhibits, mock-ups, diagrams, displays
50% of what they HEAR AND SEE	Watch live demonstrations, videos or movies, go on a site visit
70% of what they SAY or WRITE	Complete worksheets, manuals, discussion guides
90% of what they SAY AS THEY DO AN ACTIVITY	Stimulate a real experience (practice, with coaching) Do the real thing

2. **Educate better business decision makers and holistic thinkers:** The ultimate goal of business strategy games is to help participants understand and practice the interconnectedness of various business disciplines and functions, and how their actions affect the bottom line performance. It is of pivotal importance to us that participants learn to

think and strategi2e holistically b discovering that no functional area in a company operates in a silo.

3. **Complimentary to theoretical education:** As imp0rtant as practical decision-making skills are, business games are meant to be complimentary to the theories taught by educators. What they enable instructors to do is t0 exemplify various business concepts in a risk free collaborative learning environment, where participants can connect them to the scenarios in their virtual companies.

4. **Easy to integrate into business courses:** Cesim simulations cover an array of business concepts in a number of different disciplines with the goal of developing participants' business acumen. The selection ranges from international business and strategy, marketing management, small service business management to hospitality management and making it easy to integrate these experiential learning tools into many business courses and training dealing with these topics.

5. **Work well in all learning formats:** Because we understand the importance of mobility and the ubiquity of interconnectedness. all Cesim business simulators are online, require no more than a browser operate, and therefore accommodate well a traditional classroom, blended or online leamina formats.

6. **Require no IT knowledge or software installation from the educator:** One of the commodities educators have little of his time, so we want to make sure that none of it is wasted on software installation and tedious set-up processes. The Cesim simulation platform enables instructors to create a course in less than 5 minutes and run it on any

computer's browser with an internet connection. The IT department of your institution will be relieved!

7. **Have the power to bring participants together from around the world:** Have you ever wished if you could create a truly international class competition amongst participants from different higher education institutions around the world? Cesim business simulations have been used by over 300,000 participants worldwide to improve their practical business decision making skills, many of them which partook in cross-border join courses organized by their institutions. It is a fantastic way to expose participants to a genuinely international competitive environment and foster relationships with partner universities globally.

8. **Provide the best practical way for participants to learn the interconnectedness of business decisions:** Before students embark on their career journey of actually doing an internship or getting employed jn a managerial position, business games are the best Way to learn the complex nature of business functions, the interconnectedness of the functions, and how participants' own decisions contribute to the success or failure of the firm.

9. **Built on sound economic theories:** A learning tool is only as good as the algorithm and theories it is built on, and this is especially true for business games which aim to simulate plausible real life market conditions and scenarios to improve the business acumen of participants.