

## Talent Development 12 Career & Leadership Development

### by Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD



Section 2.6 in the CPTD Certification program for ATD is Career & Leadership Development. The first bullet reads, "Skill in sourcing, designing, building and evaluating leadership development experiences."

In this article, I will describe the process I use to develop, refine, upgrade, and evaluate leadership development programs for my Leadergrow, Inc. Business.

All my life I have been fascinated by leadership. Even as a young boy I wanted to know what made some leaders amazing while others, seemingly equally qualified, struggled. During my early years I observed constantly, but I did not find the answers I was looking for.

Upon entering the corporate world, I started studying leadership in earnest. By reading and listening to programs, I was mentored by many of the great leadership gurus of all time, including Napoleon Hill, Earl Nightingale, Brian Tracy, John Maxwell and numerous other leadership authors. My knowledge base was growing, but I needed to get more specific with the training.

For over 30 years, I ran a "leadership laboratory" at my place of work. I surrounded myself with the best leaders I could find, and we learned from each other how to apply the theories we were reading about at the time. I also completed my MBA studies in Behavioral Science.

Eventually, I learned that there are a million behaviors that constitute great leadership, but all of them are enabled by one single concept. That concept is trust. I learned that the leaders who can build, maintain, and repair trust enable all of the other behaviors (such as respecting people, being consistent, delegating well, etc.) to work like magic. Leaders who fail to create a culture of high trust work like crazy on all of the other behaviors without much success.

Trust becomes the golden key to great leadership. If you have it, your success as a leader is assured. If you fail to develop high trust with your group, then you will be locked out from the halls of great leadership.

Immediately after retiring from my full-time job as a Division Manager for a large company, I went to work designing leadership development programs. Developing leaders was always my passion at work, and I figured that doing the same thing after leaving the corporate world would be rewarding and also lead to a stable income for decades to come.

I started teaching at several of the Business Schools within driving distance. I also made a proposal to the local Chamber of Commerce to run a series of “Leadership for Managers” courses at the chamber. These teaching opportunities made sense, as they both fed my consulting business. I also joined the National Speakers Association and prepared to spread the word about the benefits of a high trust culture widely.

As I teach each course, I take feedback at the end so the material can be continually upgraded. The course has now expanded beyond the original 20 hour format because there are so many wonderful videos available to illustrate key points. Also, during COVID-19 I recast the entire program to be virtual. This change is a real blessing, because I can now reach people all over the world without having to travel.

Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD, is a consultant, trainer, speaker, and author in the areas of leadership and trust. He is the author of: *The Trust Factor: Advanced Leadership for Professionals*, *Understanding E-Body Language: Building Trust Online*, *Leading with Trust is Like Sailing Downwind*, and *Trust in Transition: Navigating Organizational Change*. Bob has many years as a senior executive with a Fortune 500 Company and with non-profit organizations.

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