



Learning to Lead at Scale: Accelerating Time to Results for Leaders Taking on Expanded Roles

Leaders transitioning from leading a team or a single function to larger-scale, cross-functional roles need to master new skills. Insight Experience partnered with a team from a major digital retail and cloud services company to design and deliver one of the highest-rated development programs in the company's history.

Challenge

The client wanted to accelerate the pipeline of leaders ready to take on larger-scale roles, particularly in supporting continued geographic expansion. This program was chartered to develop leaders in anticipation of assuming the role and to help them reduce the ramp-up time to leading larger organizations. It is designed to enable already-strong functional leaders to build on their sturdy foundation and expand their skills in advance of need.

Solution

The four-day **Learning to Lead at Scale** program integrates insights from senior leaders, exploration with peers of key topics, and actionable ideas and tips with an engaging business simulation, which is designed to highlight the skills leaders need to deepen and expand in order to lead larger teams. It is delivered in cohorts of participants mixed across geographies and businesses. As a result, participants also build a network of new peers and contacts across the rapidly growing company. The program is reinforced with periodic alumni events and checkpoints to support continuous learning and practical application of the ideas presented during the session.

Learning Objectives

As a result of Learning to Lead at Scale program, participants learn to:

- » Lead multilayered, multifunctional teams with a focus on the ability to:
 - Set clear direction and priorities.
 - Align and develop direct reports to deliver results.
 - Communicate consciously, consistently, and with context in an environment of change and ambiguity.
- » Influence effectively across the organization with a focus on the ability to:
 - Articulate a compelling, succinct point of view and galvanize senior leader support.
 - Proactively cultivate an extended network of relationships to deliver results.
 - Influence others from a broad perspective to drive change.

Design Highlights

Because every element of this program is tailored to the unique culture and business dynamics of the client, it has a positive impact on participants. Its design includes the voice of company leaders; the business simulation highlights archetype characters and scenarios based on company experience; and senior leaders help bring the simulation to life through role plays and feedback on challenging conversations.

Client Leader Voice

The program seamlessly leverages the unique insights and voices of leaders in the client organization. It was sponsored by three senior leaders who shaped the content with examples and insights about leading inside the company’s unique culture. Video and quotes from over 20 leaders across the globe are incorporated into the program teaching materials and discussions.

Throughout the experience, real client leaders took on roles in the simulation for role plays and presentations. The “characters” engaged in interactions and then stepped out of roles to offer feedback and guidance to participants. The practical advice and storytelling deepened participants’ understanding of the dynamics back on the job.

Simulation Scenarios

The simulation experience challenges leaders to make quarterly decisions to manage a business and overlays that experience with a series of individual – and sometimes unexpected – events. These pop-up issues test leaders’ abilities to think in the moment and to respond from a broader perspective – not just solve problems.

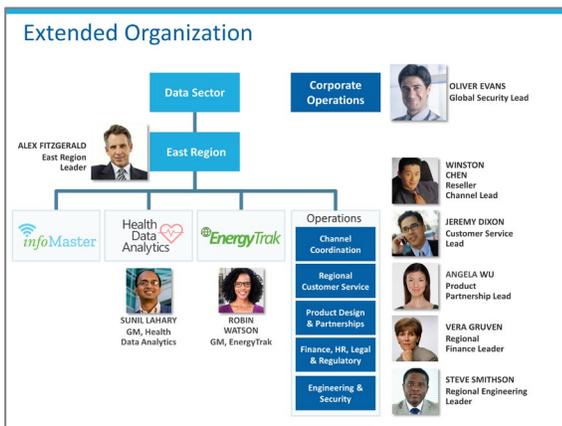
"So What?" for Each Content Module

Each model or idea taught in the course concluded with a slide highlighting the benefit of putting the idea in practice, not just for the leader but also for their organization. These “So What?” images reminded leaders to think from their team’s perspective about their leadership in action:

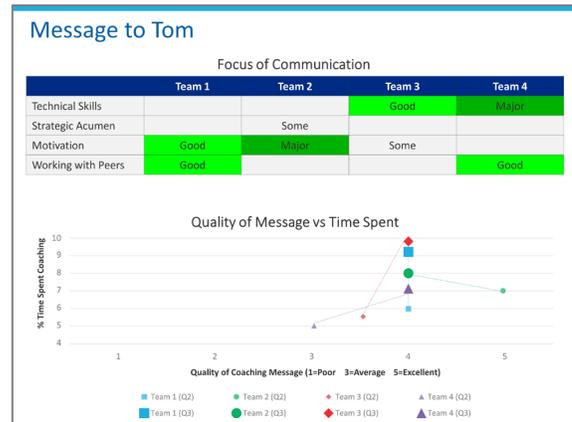


Simulation Overview

The business simulation focuses on leadership levers for leading beyond line of sight. Participants manage a team of direct reports with unique personality profiles, performance history, and functional dynamics. The simulation also incorporates a range of peers and cross-functional leaders, which means that successful decision-making requires influence and engagement across boundaries:



Simulation participants lead direct reports through a range of decisions, including coaching and direction to employees. These choices impact the employee’s performance and, ultimately, the business results:



Participants consider a range of issues facing the business, including the possibility of an external joint venture requiring collaboration and support from resources beyond their control.

History and Results

This program runs four to six times a year for participants nominated by business unit leaders. It received high ratings (4.7 or higher) at delivery. Participants had over a 2x rate of promotion than their peers, and client anecdotes show that the program has reduced attrition at this vulnerable leadership transition point.

Here is what some participants have said about this program:

- » “The ability to take time out, reflect, learn, challenge my thinking and give me a better toolset to develop as a leader of leaders”
- » “Thinking about the importance of long-term vision at multiple levels-business, team, and self. The impact/benefit of networks on building that vision.”
- » “I really appreciated that so many leaders from different departments showed up during the training, shared their experience and best-practices. This helped me to see that there are different ways, since we have different characters, to be successful in leading and influencing people.”
- » “The course design is very logical and helpful, the mechanisms developed are powerful tools to help us learn and observe the learning, such as, business simulation, speeches from executives, peer partner setup, a group of diversity team, and follow up as next step to allow us to have continuous leadership growth. Thank you.”
- » “The peer interaction and feedback stood out. The diversity of thought and experiences in the room really helped. The simulation was outstanding and conducted really well!”