EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPING GLOBAL MANAGERS

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ABSTRACT

This is a proposed research in three stages of management development—needs analysis, program design, and evaluation. For the purposes of this study, the first stage of the research dealing with the needs assessment of global managers was completed first. In the second stage, the correlates of learning styles and training needs effectiveness were found. In the final stages of design, delivery and evaluation, the program was designed with the background variables and leadership profiles of global managers that were correlated with the training needs of these managers and an executive development program was delivered to nominated executives around the world. Evaluation at the lowest two levels—Reaction and Learning—have been summarized to portray the effectiveness of the weeklong executive development program. The post study of executive Behavior and Results accruing due to the program itself will be reported when the post study is completed.

I. INTRODUCTION

Needs Assessment international managers / executives was studied with respect to the scope of the study suggested in the abstract. In this paper the design and delivery of the executive training program and its candid or detailed evaluation results are presented in the Reaction and Learning level (Kirkpatrick’s four levels). Three and six month post training evaluations have not been concluded yet, for determining the change in executive behavior and the results that accrue on the job due to transfer of training.

Executive Participants’ Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Job Level</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Management</td>
<td>29.65%</td>
<td>Upper Management</td>
<td>13.75%</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>58.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing Engineering</td>
<td>10.47%</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>48.42%</td>
<td>Sciences</td>
<td>13.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Engineering</td>
<td>45.64%</td>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>18.05%</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>15.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and Marketing</td>
<td>2.03%</td>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>17.48%</td>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>8.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12.21%</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.29%</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career in yrs</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-3 yrs.</td>
<td>2.32%</td>
<td>Less than 100</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 yrs.</td>
<td>6.09%</td>
<td>100-1000</td>
<td>26.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 yrs.</td>
<td>21.16%</td>
<td>1000-5000</td>
<td>29.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 yrs.</td>
<td>26.38%</td>
<td>5000-10000</td>
<td>5.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 15 yrs.</td>
<td>44.06%</td>
<td>10000-50000</td>
<td>18.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>50000-100000</td>
<td>5.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Over 100000</td>
<td>4.29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program Design as an Extension of the Needs Analysis

The Executive Development Associates survey reported that management training programs were being more focused on strategy, productivity, leadership, and global competition. The merit of this report has prompted many university based management development programs to be tailored to the above expressed needs of the managers. The University’s Executive Program also was designed and focused on these dimensions. Four primary areas of management development was substantiated as shown below-- this led to participant's developing depth as well as impacting upon knowledge, skills, attitude and behavior.

The executive development program consisted of four tracks running in parallel with sixteen faculty members. These four main tracks were Strategy, Productivity, Leadership and Global Competition. Each track had four relevant modules as shown below. Each module and its instructor were evaluated extensively for the desirable outcomes of the training program in four levels of outcome: Reaction, Learning, Behavior and Results of the training program.

- **Track 1--Strategy:** Negotiation and Dispute Resolution, Competitive Advantage, Change Management, Human Resource Management
- **Track 2--Productivity:** Design for manufacturability, Human Factors and Ergonomics, Career Management, Decision Analysis
- **Track 3--Leadership:** Managerial Communication, Designing Organizations for Teams, Creative Process, Presentational Speaking
- **Track 4--Global Competition:** Global Technology Management, Managing Investment Decisions, Marketing for Technical Managers, Accounting and Finance

### Five Day International Executive Development Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Block</th>
<th>Strategy Track</th>
<th>Productivity Track</th>
<th>Leadership Track</th>
<th>Global Competition Track</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00-9:30 AM</td>
<td>Negotiation and Dispute Resolution</td>
<td>Design for manufacturability</td>
<td>Managerial Communication</td>
<td>Global Technology Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30-10:00 AM</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 AM-11:30</td>
<td>Competitive Advantage</td>
<td>Human Factors and Ergonomics</td>
<td>Designing Organizations for Teams</td>
<td>Managing Investment Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:30 PM</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30-2:00 PM</td>
<td>Change Management</td>
<td>Career Management</td>
<td>Creative Process</td>
<td>Marketing for Technical Managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00-2:30 PM</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM EVALUATION

Fifteen questions regarding the effectiveness of teaching of each of the sixteen professors were answered by participants using a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Q1. My instructor displays a clear understanding of the course topics  
Q2. My instructor has an effective presentations style.  
Q3. My instructor seems well prepared for class  
Q4. My instructor stimulates interest in the class  
Q5. The objective of the course were clearly explained to me  
Q6. This course contributes significantly to my professional development  
Q7. My instructor develops classroom discussions skillfully  
Q8. One real strength of this course is the classroom discussion  
Q9. Assigned readings significantly contributed to this course  
Q10. I highly recommend this course  
Q11. My instructor motivates me to do my best work  
Q12. My instructor explains difficult material clearly  
Q13. Course assignments are interesting and stimulating  
Q14. Overall this course is among the best I have ever taken  
Q15. Overall this instructor is among the best I have ever known

The results of each trainer/professor's evaluation were combined and tabulated. Each instructor's evaluation is highlighted with mean score and standard deviation within a range from low to a high, with an intermediate medium score. The overall scores for all the questions are highlighted in the last column.

Thus teaching and course effectiveness could be compared and strategic decisions regarding the most liked courses and least liked courses could be made for the next program offering. The menu of course offerings can be successfully targeted to future audience with this comparative matrix evaluation and review.

III. PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL -- SUMMARY

Following are the questions and summary of responses to the questions regarding the effectiveness of the program. Written answers were given by the participants in place of interview as the program administrators felt that interviews may consume too much of the participants' time.

1. What are one or two of the important purposes of the Executive Program?

Five of the responses from eighteen participants reported that sharing concerns and ideas was important. Five of the respondents stated that just the interactions were important. Developing new skills was named twice. developing confidence and developing leadership were each mentioned once.
2. In your experience, what are some of the most powerful ways to stimulate leadership in your subordinates?

Four respondents of the eighteen stated that one way to stimulate leadership in subordinates was to give subordinates responsibilities. Teaching, challenging and coaching were each suggested three times as ways of stimulating leadership. Setting examples and using motivation were mentioned twice.

3. What are one or two contributions will you make in your position after the Executive Program?

Six respondents to this question were concerned with contribution to team development and empowerment. Two respondents emphasized that they would try to improve communications and group dynamics. Two respondents thought that program taught them creativity and change principles. Two responses were concerned with motivation of employees, leadership and management process.

4. E/MP uses the following learning activities for professional development: formal classes, cases, readings and assignments, discussion groups, OD/Sensitivity Training exercises, and informal small group activities.

a. What activities did have most desirable learning impact?

Almost all the respondents unequivocally stated that case studies and small discussion groups provided the most desirable learning effect.

b. Why do you think they were the most appropriate effective?

Five respondents said that they shared concerns, interactions and viewpoints. Four said they learned from real life situations of case studies and group activities. Three said that by doing, the level of retention was increased and because they were tangible. The remaining ones did not answer.

c. How will you benefit from these activities?

Four respondents said they learned new techniques. Three said that program broadened perspectives. Three said they saw new group and team involvement from program.

5. How did the program operate to fulfill its objectives?

Most of the respondents said that the program fulfilled the objectives. Two said that the program gave variety of methods and options in dealing with situations. Two reported that the program was intensive with high learning expectations.

6. How is the program linked to the overall leadership development for your company?

Three said that the program was not linked to corporate strategy. Three said that the program exposed the department heads first to change and implement competitive
advantage. Two said that their companies have been sending participants because the program was good.

7. a. Describe your role in your company implementing some of the goals of Executive Program.

Three said that they would lead in implementing within their jurisdiction. Two said they would assume responsibility. Two said they would use change methods learned. One said he/she would continue team building efforts.

b. Please give an example of ways your goals have changed recently to adjust to changes occurring in your area of work.

Four respondents said that their company's goals have changed to "empowered teams" and customer service. Two said that such programs enhanced effectiveness and enabled to value programs.

8. a. What do you think are the strengths of the program?

Most respondents said that interaction was the main strength. Other strengths were varieties in classes, topics, ideas, critical thinking, faculty, and convenient and open format.

b. What criteria did you use just now, as you identified the strengths?

Criteria were personal learning, opinion, observation, environment, participant backgrounds and rewards of the program.

c. What do you judge are the limitations of the program?

Most respondents suggested that limitations were time, and not enough course offerings, concerted focus--no reflection in action, frequency of programing, and lack of integration in lectures.

d. What changes would reduce or eliminate the limitations?

Some respondents said that the program should be practical, with increased teaching time for breadth, precise learning objectives, increased class size, should stretch over longer periods and be more frequent.

e. What changes could turn them to strengths?

Two said more classes and instructors must be added. Some suggested split pattern of class with work-learn-work. Others did not know.

9. Please give an example of "informal" learning situations in which E/MP participants like you acquired new leadership skills.

Almost unanimously the response was cases and group discussions.

10. What are your goals for implementing the program benefits as they relate to your leadership?
Most respondents stated that they would take leadership roles with more responsibilities and use the knowledge gained. One said develop team communications.

IV. BENCHMARKING

For continuous improvement purpose, the executive program best practices were followed in evaluating the best course and the best instructor and the underlying systemic reasons. Competitive Advantage and Organizational Capabilities (CAOC) was unanimously voted as the best course by the participants. Its results are shown below. The mean satisfaction level in reaction and learning are toward the highest end in the fifteen criteria with very small standard deviations. These are highlighted in red for the CACC course in the overall cluster of sixteen modules and sixteen instructors. This course was considered as the best in six criteria of evaluation, the second best in four criteria and about third best in about five criteria. This benchmark uses the transfer of learning on the job in a three month and a six month post survey.

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