

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM
A Plan for Intentionally Growing Leaders
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INTRODUCTION

In order for organizations to grow, they must have a system for growing leaders. Developing leaders must be an integral part of their organizational culture. This involves identifying leaders, training them, and ongoing coaching and development. This process then becomes inculcated into the organizational culture with the result that developing leaders is inherent to the system.

Leaders are made, not born. It is important to identify people with leadership potential, begin where they are, and begin the process of developing them. A leadership farm system is very much like professional baseball wherein players are developed in a farm system that involves single A, double A and triple A developmental leagues. Each level in this “farm system” requires a certain skill set to be able to play. In order to move to the next level, a player must develop certain competencies. The underlying philosophy is to develop the talent of the players so that they do advance, and hopefully make it to the major leagues.

Our system uses ornithology (the study of birds) as its model. Ornithologists contend that birds have three ways of flying: they flap, glide, or soar. We use three different types of birds to address these three levels of leadership development. The first level will be the Peacock. A peacock is a beautiful bird with a wide wingspan. They are amazing to look at. Yes, they can fly, but they only stay airborne for brief moments. They flap and struggle to stay airborne. Then there is the Cardinal. The cardinal is also another beautiful bird and it flies in a traditional manner. Cardinals can flap or glide. In order to achieve elevation, they must flap. In the gliding mode, they either stay level or descend. The Eagle is the only bird that can actually soar. This means that they lock their wings and glide through the air just like a cardinal, but the difference is they can ascend or descend while their wings are locked.

At PeakePotential, our goal is to help leaders soar like eagles. This means helping them to achieve their full potential as leaders and be successful at leading others. This means that there are certain skills that must be developed and specific strategies for growing them.

The Peacock

This individual is a program staff person who has very little or no supervisory responsibilities, but demonstrates potential to move up to the next level of leadership.

Current Competencies – What strengths and passions are needed for this level?

- **Education Level** – This individual has a bachelor’s degree or professional training in their specific field.

- **Work Experience** – This individual has 1-5 years of work experience, with some experience in coordinating projects, initiatives, and programs in which they have demonstrated a level of mastery and excellence.
- **Leadership Capacity** – This individual should have leadership capacity as evidenced by competencies in the following areas: good people skills, basic business and operational knowledge in the organization, ability to collaborate with a team, be an avid and self-directed learner, and be a creative thinker.

Training Needs – What are the growth areas of this leader?

- **Assessment Tools** – EQ Inventory, The DiSC Assessment;
- **Skill Development** - Specific items will be determined that the potential leader should work on in order to move to the next level. Attention will be given to the areas outlined above under “Leadership Strengths”.
- **Self-Evaluation** – the potential leader will be required to engage in a self-evaluation process. This will be used to determine his/her ability to reflect and to measure the degree of self-awareness.
- **360° Degree Feedback** – A tool will be used to gather feedback on the potential leader. This information will be compared to the self-evaluation and coaching observations and insights.

Training Methods – What content, modes, and strategies will get this leader to the next level?

- **Leadership Coaching** – The coaching approach will be based on Blooms Taxonomy, which will address the coachee’s needs in the following areas: 1) Knowledge – what do I need to learn, 2) Psycho-Motor – what skills do I need to work on, and 3) Affective – what personhood issues are keeping me from reaching my potential as a leader?
- **Apprenticeship** - Someone in the organization will mentor this individual in order to model leadership. This potential leader, who is a “Peacock”, will be mentored by a “Cardinal”, the next level in this system.
- **Preceptorial Cohorts** – This individual will participate in a learning cohort with other Peacocks. This strategy will compliment the coaching component. Cohorts will read the “*The Leadership Challenge*” by Kouzes and Posner, and participate in discussion groups to process the information in the book.

Minimum Competency Level – What growth is needed to move to the next level?
What skills must be developed?

- Demonstrates capacity to influence others in the organization
- Above average EQ and relational skills
- Organized
- Self awareness of professional and personal liabilities
- Self-directed Learner
- Some proficiency in communication

Evaluation – How will the leader be evaluated?

- **360° Degree Feedback** – This feedback would come from the individual’s supervisor, colleagues who work at his/her level, the leadership coach and supervisees if he/she has that responsibility.
- **Report** - The coach will write a Coaching Report detailing the growth and progress of the individual.
- **Professional Growth Plan** - The potential leader will draft a Professional Growth Plan that will affirm their strengths and address their liabilities. This plan will focus on needs, goals, action items, milestones, and growth results.

The Cardinal

This individual is a mid-level manager who has aspirations and/or potential to become a higher-level executive.

Current Competencies

- **Education Level** – This leader will have at least a bachelor’s degree, and preferably a post-graduate (master’s degree) in his/her field.
- **Work Experience** – This leader will have at least 3-5 years experience as a mid-level manager.
- **Leadership Strengths** – This person should have competencies in the following areas: exceptional relational and emotional intelligence skills, ability to shape norms and culture, ability to build and manage a cohesive team, ability to supervise staff, organizational skills, ability to manage multiple projects, collaborative leadership, and ability to shape team values.

Training Needs

- **Assessment Tools** – EQ Inventory, The DiSC Assessment;
- **Skill Development** – Specific items will be determined that the leader needs to work on in order to move to the next level of leadership. Focused attention will be given to the items mentioned above under Leadership Strengths.
- **Leader’s Self Evaluation** – The leader will write a self-evaluation of how he/she sees himself/herself as a leader. This will be used to measure the individual’s ability to do self-reflection and measure the level of self-awareness, especially in growth areas.
- **360° Degree Feedback** – The 360° will be used to measure how the individual is perceived as a leader from the people he/she supervises, who work at the same level and people who work above. The data collected will be compared to the leader’s self-evaluation and coaching notes/observations.

Training Methods

- **Leadership Coaching** – In Bloom’s Taxonomy model, attention will continue to be given on all three components of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. At this Cardinal level, special focus will be on the psychomotor (skill development). In order to move from a Cardinal to an Eagle, a person must learn to move from just being a manager to being a leader. There are overlapping skills

that are crucial to both management and leadership, but there are specialized skills that must be learned in order to move to the executive level.

- **Off-site Training Conferences** – A couple of conferences entailing anything from one to three days should be a component of this developmental level. The selection of the conferences should be specific to the leader’s growth needs. After completing the coaching process, and writing a “Professional Growth Plan”, specific conferences should be targeted, budgeted, and scheduled that will assist the leader with his/her leadership growth.
- **Preceptorial Cohorts** – The Cardinal level will participate in learning groups. A high-level leadership book will be selected (TBD) that will be read by individuals and processed in the learning groups.
- **Apprenticeship** – An “Eagle” will mentor this leader. This will involve walking alongside a seasoned executive to observe and learn how to function at a higher level of leadership. This approach will not only involve observation, but will employ the kinesthetic approach to learning. There will be times when the Eagle will function with the Cardinal (learning by doing, with guidance). There will be times later in the mentoring process when the Cardinal will function with the Eagle observing. After the leadership function is complete, the Eagle will give the Cardinal feedback.

Minimum Competency Level

- 3-5 years experience in management
- Solid EQ/Relational Skills
- Above averaged administration skills
- Ability to develop, communicate and execute vision
- Ability to build a team
- Ability to navigate and manage conflict
- Ability to plan

Evaluation

- **360° Degree Feedback** – This feedback will come from employees in the organization who work below, alongside, and above the individual.
- **Coaching Report** – The coach will write a report that details growth, progress, and areas yet to be worked on.
- **Professional Growth Plan** – The Cardinal will write a Professional Growth Plan outlining needs, goals, action items, milestones and growth results. The plan will also affirm strengths and address liabilities.

The Eagle

This is a high level of leadership that involves having organizational oversight in an executive position.

Current Competencies

- **Educational Level** – This person must have a minimum of a bachelor’s degree, and preferable a post-graduate degree. In addition to formal training, this person must be a life-long learner and has engaged in learning activities in order to stay sharp.

- **Work Experience** – This person should have at least 5-7 years experience serving in an executive leadership position. In addition to his/her current experience, this is a person who has worked through the ranks, even if that experience comes from other companies. This person understands the roles of employee and mid-level management because he/she has served in those positions as well.
- **Leadership Strengths** – This person is a high level leader and should demonstrate competencies in efficient & effective management, conflict management skills, administrative skills, high relational/emotional intelligent skills, strategic thinking & planning skills, shaping/defining organizational culture, establishing organizational norms and values, team building, and guiding vision. What makes the Eagle level high level is this is a person who does not drown in the minutiae. This is a person who makes sure that the details get done, but this person focuses on the 30,000 feet view. This person is a visionary, and must be competent in accessing the direction of the organization, developing vision, casting vision, and implementing vision strategy.

Training Needs

- **Assessment Tools** – Kraybill Conflict Inventory, EQ Inventory. There are many conflict styles inventories available. The Kraybill provides both a calm score and a storm score. The calm style is how a leader responds to the initial outset of conflict. The storm score is how the leader responds to ongoing conflict. The EQ inventory is crucial because the leader must have self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management.
- **Personality Inventories** – A battery of personality inventories such as the DiSC Assessment, the Meyers-Briggs, and others will grow the leader's level of self-awareness. The results of these and other inventories will give the leader a snapshot of his/her personality, identifying preferences, and how they respond to life.
- **Leader's Self Evaluation** – This leader will engage in a self-evaluation to address self-awareness level and issues.
- **360° Degree Feedback** – Often leaders at this level do not get proper feedback. Most higher-level leadership positions are “lonely”. Sometimes leaders isolate themselves. This process will afford the leader an opportunity to receive adequate feedback about leadership behaviors.
- **Skills Assessment** – Items will be selected from the *Leadership Skills Checklist* to determine areas that the executive needs to work on.

Training Methods

- **Professional Executive Coaching** – At this level, it is crucial to secure the ongoing services of a trained professional executive coach to help this high-level leader navigate through the complex issues of leading an organization.
- **Off-site Professional Development Conferences** – Executive leaders are busy, and often do not take the time to engage in professional and leadership development. The “Professional Development Plan” should call for this leader to attend at least two conferences annually.

- **Leadership Peer Support Group** - Being a part of an semi-formal learning network with comparable executive from other companies. Not only is this good for networking, but iron sharpens iron. Leaders grow when they expand their network with the intended purpose of learning from leaders of other organizations.

Minimum Competency Level

- Ability to lead an organization
- Exceptional EQ/Relational Skills
- Ability to guide strategic planning processes
- Ability to build a solid executive team
- Ability to delegate and focus on leadership
- Exceptional administrative skills
- Exceptional communication skills
- Ability to cast organizational vision
- Ability to motivate and inspire others

Evaluation

- **Self Evaluation** – The executive will evaluate his/her development using a self-evaluation tool.
- **Executive Coach Evaluation** – The executive coach will provide feedback on growth and development.
- **360° Degree Feedback** – Feedback will be used provided by various layers of the organization.