



# DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE LEADERS

## PART TWO OF A THREE-PART SERIES

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### Series Overview

In [Part One](#) of this article series, readers learned that a fundamental principle of effective coaching is that a leader's beliefs and biases about people at work have consequences that are manifest in the motivation and performance of others. [A self-scoring beliefs inventory](#) accompanied the article to help the leader practice *self-coaching* before coaching others.

In this month's issue readers will explore a process map for creating a simple and effective approach to helping others with their leadership development. Desired leadership competencies are identified, skill and performance gaps are considered, and a plan is developed that is customized to the individual needs of the associate.

Next month's third and final article in the series will feature four highly effective strategies managers can use for preparing their leaders for the critical challenges they face.<sup>1</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> These timely articles and the accompanying tools and templates are featured in the [Developing Effective Leaders](#) three-day seminar introduced by Cornelius & Associates this year.

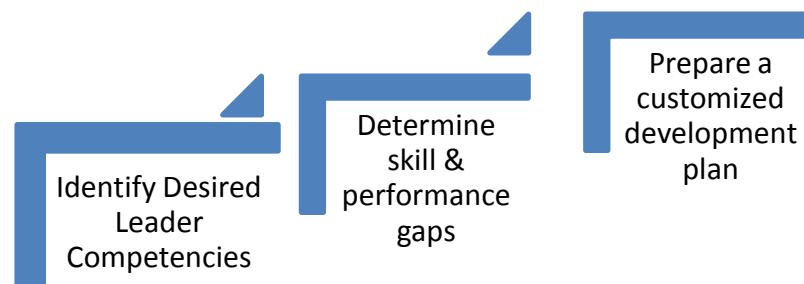
# DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE LEADERS

## PART TWO: LEADER DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

*“The task of a leader is to get people from where they are to where they have not been.”*

*-- Henry Kissinger*

Planning is the most overlooked component of the leadership development process for the new or experienced manager. Most managers spend more time preparing for a departmental meeting than career development planning for their direct reports. This article introduces three fundamental steps in leader development planning.



### IDENTIFY DESIRED LEADER COMPETENCIES

The manager starts the leader development process by asking the question, “What are the organizational expectations for our leaders?” Typically, this question is answered in one of two ways: (1) a researched-based set of generally accepted core competencies, and (2) modeling of the traits and behaviors of successful leaders within the organization.

#### ***Generally Accepted Core Competencies***

Organizations often use generic competencies that they assume to be valid. These competencies originate from a variety of sources, such as academic research, consultants, authors, company brainstorming sessions, and celebrity business leaders. Examples include lists of presumed leadership qualities and traits, communication skills, ability to influence others, and more.

### **Leader Modeling**

The second most common approach used by companies today is modeling one or more successful leaders in the organization’s history and culture. Although it seems logical that an organization would want to replicate successful current and past leaders, the reality is that there may be factors that favorably influenced the success of the highly regarded internal heroes that may not exist for others. Leader modeling is also vulnerable to management’s subjective view of good leadership and its skills in identifying appropriate leadership traits, skills, and behaviors.

### **Creating a Competency Template**

Once management adopts a leadership model the next step is to create a template for breaking down the skills and behaviors that describe the identified competencies. The following example arranges the information into a simple format that identifies desired skills and behaviors linked to each competency area.

**Step One:** Identify the general competency area.

**Step Two:** For each area, list a minimum of three specific leader competencies.

**Step Three:** For each competency specified in Step Two, name at least three supporting skills or behaviors the person must be able to demonstrate as an indication of competency.

### **Competency Template Example**

<b>Topic (Step One)</b>	<b>Competencies (Step Two)</b>	<b>Indicative Skills &amp; Behaviors (Step Three)</b>
<b>Innovation</b>	Promotes innovation in the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Places value on idea-generation of others</li><li>• Builds upon Best Practices</li><li>• Provides opportunities for people to be involved</li></ul>
	Encourages risk taking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenges the status quo</li><li>• Weighs risks vs. rewards</li><li>• Encourages proactivity</li></ul>
	Rewards innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognizes and encourages idea generation</li><li>• Provides an improvement process</li><li>• Provides positive feedback and support</li></ul>

## DETERMINE SKILL AND PERFORMANCE GAPS

Once you have a competency template, the process of determining skill and performance gaps starts with observation and then uses a cause analysis approach to identify the person's leader development opportunities.

### Evaluate *Expected vs. Actual Performance*

Continuing the previous example, the manager devises a method to measure performance against the competency standards. There are both quantitative and qualitative ways to do this, depending upon the purpose of the leadership development assistance to be provided. A simple non-quantitative tool, like the one shown below, can be very helpful in the planning process. *(It is important to note that not every leadership development coaching conversation is part of a formal performance management process.)*

Competency	Behavior or Skills	Observations		
Encourages risk taking	Challenges status quo	<i>Excels</i>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<i>Needs Improvement</i>
	Weighs risks vs. rewards	<i>Excels</i>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<i>Needs Improvement</i>
	Encourages proactivity	<i>Excels</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>

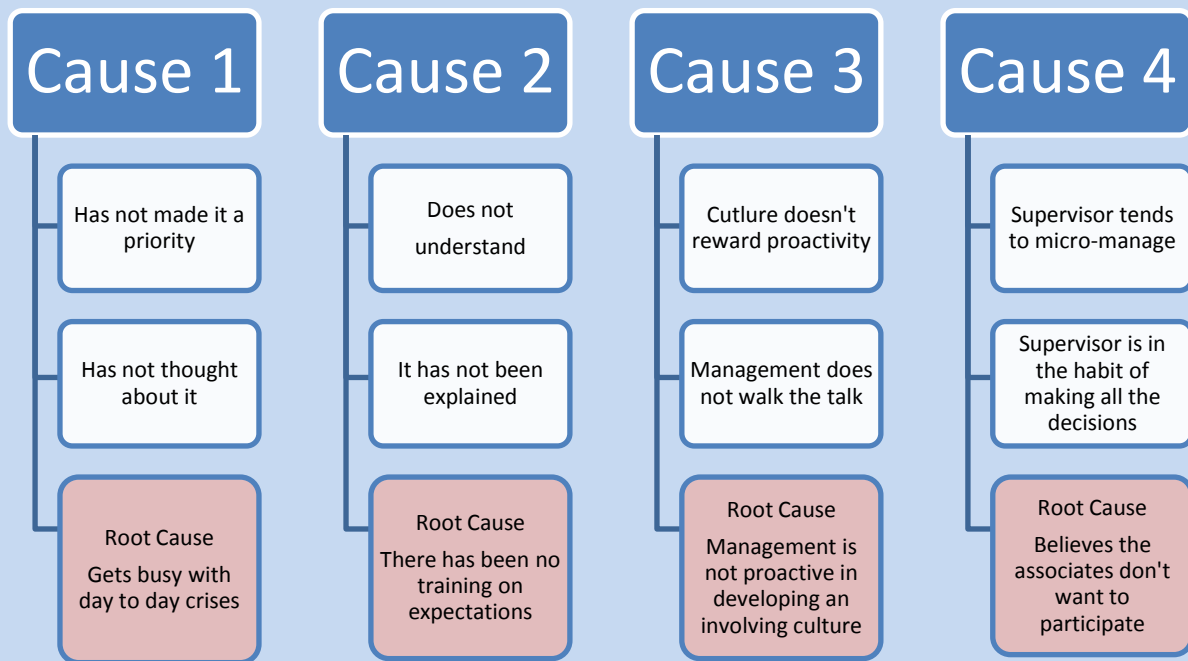
In this case there are opportunities for improvement in all three competency behaviors and skills. The Manager would consider the highest priority behaviors or skills in planning for the intervention.

### Example: Cause Analysis

Once the development opportunities have been identified, specific coaching and training objectives need to be established in order to deliver the best leadership development action plan. These are determined as a result of a thoughtful *cause analysis*.

In the example above, suppose the manager determines that the supervisor needs improvement in the competency of *encouraging risk taking*. Specifically, the supervisor needs to do a better job of *encouraging proactivity*. The manager does a cause analysis in order to identify possible root causes that will in turn lead to an effective intervention (see example, below)

Topic: Innovation  
 Competency: Encourages Risk Taking  
 Behavior / Skill: Encourages Proactivity  
 Manager's Observations: *Supervisor is not doing well at encouraging proactivity*



The manager, in this case, identified four likely causes for why the supervisor has not been encouraging his people to be more proactive. By asking “why” the manager is able to probe each cause for possible root causes. Interventions are then implemented to remove the causes.

This table identifies the probable interventions that are needed.

	Root Causes	Probable Interventions Needed
Cause 1	The supervisor gets busy with day to day crises	Coach the supervisor on how to prioritize tasks.
Cause 2	There has been no training on expectations	Train on expectations
Cause 3	Management needs to commit to living the company values	Have the management team do a better job of stating expectations and living the company values.
Cause 4	The supervisor believes the employees don't want to participate.	Coach the leader on positive leadership beliefs, habits, and practices, including how to involve and empower people.

## DEVELOP A PLAN CUSTOMIZED TO THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF THE ASSOCIATE

The third step in the process is to create an individualized leadership development plan. The Plan should include, at a minimum:

1. A brief description of the person's developmental needs,
2. Identification of the symptoms that support the needs diagnosis,
3. Specific developmental outcomes and goals, both long and short term,
4. A problem solving approach to identifying the likely causes and how to overcome obstacles,
5. Intervention details, including resources and support measures. I the resource intervention and support (coaching, training, conflict resolution, process improvement, etc.).

[Click here](#) for an Individual Leadership Development & Support Plan and Planning Worksheets.

## SUMMARY

In this article, a process for creating a simple and effective approach to helping others with their leadership development has been presented. The steps in the process include (1) identify desired leadership competencies, skills, and behaviors, (2) determine developmental opportunities by using a cause analysis and problem solving approach, and (3) complete an individual leadership development plan.

In the next issue of our newsletter, the third and final article in the series will feature four highly effective strategies managers can use for preparing their leaders for the critical challenges they face.

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