

Management Development for Impact

By Robert M. Brown Jr. and John T. Eggers

According to *Leadership Development in Balance: Made/Born*,¹ by Bruce J. Avolio, “Only 10 percent of the leadership development interventions out there will be able to get past the first level of evaluation of programmatic impact.” And in *The High Impact Leader: Moments Matter in Accelerating Authentic Leadership*,² by Bruce Avolio and Fred Luthans, the authors suggest that “most leadership development programs have no clear end, terminal learning or performance impact goal.” If an individual cannot assess participant behavioral change and subsequent impact on the organization, how can he or she know if the program is making any difference? Evidence or indicators that NIC programs have meaning and that at the very least, they create positive change within organizations receiving leadership development programs are needed. To achieve this outcome takes effort on the part of the participant as well as from top leadership in the organization. It is the individual’s growth and development as well as learning and a positive organizational change that creates return-on-investment. To be successful, this feat takes effort on the part of the participant’s top leadership group, the participant and the organization to create an effective “learning organization” that establishes a positive environment for leadership and management development.

In an attempt to address the issues mentioned, the National Institute of Corrections Academy, as part of its delivery of the Management Development for the Future training program to the Utah Department of Corrections, has put into place a formal evaluation protocol based on Donald Kirkpatrick’s book *Evaluating Training Programs, The Four Levels*.³ Kirkpatrick is a renowned expert on program evaluation. Level one focuses on the reaction participants have

to the program, level two measures participant learning, level three examines participant behavioral change based on the program and level four assesses organizational impact such as reduction of turnover, based on participant behavioral change that can be attributed to the program. This evaluation protocol is explained in greater detail in this article and consists of a two-pronged approach with Eastern Kentucky University working with the NIC Academy and the Utah Department of Corrections.

The Program

The Management Development for the Future program is delivered in three distinct three-day meetings. Each three-day meeting is approximately six to nine months apart and involves up to 35 mid-level managers. One of the program goals is to create a cadre of senior-level leaders for the next five to seven years for the organization. Participants are selected by their agency to attend the program after completing a rigorous identification and selection process usually consisting of a writing exercise and a formal interview. Participants completing phase one of the program will have acquired sound foundational skills for managing, understanding the role of the manager, and the external trends and factors that one must appropriately consider and interface with. They will be provided with the Full Range Leadership Model from which they will craft a leadership development plan. Program delivery strategies for phases one, two and three will be comprised of a blended approach incorporating both electronic and face-to-face work.

Participants completing phase two of the program will receive training in interpersonal work; the philosophy, values, and skills that a leader possesses, along with an understanding of their psychological well-being. Par-

ticipants completing phase three of the program will have acquired a structure that will give them the tools to create change, understand power and influence, communicate effectively, build teams and become transformational leaders.

Measuring Effectiveness

The Utah Department of Corrections agreed to work with all the parameters appropriate to the evaluation process. Executive and senior-level leaders were administered several survey instruments to assess their transformational leadership depth as part of NIC’s organizational readiness protocol. In *Leadership Development in Balance: Made/born*, Avolio writes, “One of the inherent problems with leadership development programs is that the program typically has a better culture and support system than the real world participants return to after the close of the program.” The top leadership of the Utah DOC, working with the NIC organizational readiness protocol has prepared for this concern. The Utah system received phase one of the program in May 2005. Phase two is scheduled for January 2006. Here are further details about each of the four levels of the program evaluation protocol.

Level 1: Evaluation (Reaction).

Informed consent of the participants was requested on day one of the program. Each participant volunteered to be part of the evaluation process and signed an informed consent statement. Participant demographic information was collected for purposes of tracking participants over time should they move within or leave the department. Participants completed an overall evaluation of phase one of the program, assessing trainers, subject matter content and delivery. This data are needed in order to make any appropriate program changes for the

future. In the majority of NIC programs, this is the only level of evaluation used.

Level 2: Evaluation (Learning). On day one of the program, participants were administered a multiple-choice pretest regarding areas to be covered during the face-to-face course delivery. A post-test was delivered on the last day of training to assess learning over the three-day period. Different questions were used for the post-test administration than in the pretest delivery.

Level 3: Evaluation⁴ (Participant Behavior). Prior to the beginning of phase one, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5X was administered online to the participants. Participants completed the instrument on themselves in a self-rater format and were also rated by their manager, direct reports, co-workers and others. This resulted in participants receiving a 42-page report covering the components of the Full Range Leadership Model. This model is comprised of three components. Transformational leadership occurs when “leaders encourage followers to both develop and perform at levels above what they may have felt was possible or beyond their own expectations.”⁵ Transactional leadership is present when leaders clarify for followers their responsibilities, expectations, tasks that must be accomplished, and the rewards followers will receive for fulfilling the contract or agreement with the leader. Nontransactional/Laissez-Faire leadership suggests the absence of leadership. In the extreme, virtually nothing is transacted between the leader and the follower. Again, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire measures the above three components of the Full Range Leadership Model.

While in phase one, the participants created a Leadership Development Plan (LDP). The LDP contains behavioral goals developed after diagnosis of their data from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire will be re-administered between phase two and three, and again six months after the completion of phase three. LDP goals will continually be crafted by the participants between each phase of the program after diag-

nosing the new Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire re-administration data. A Leadership Development Plan Progress Report will be administered the first day of phase two and three, and again six months after phase three. This is a participant self-rating report and addresses actions the participants intended to take and the outcomes achieved.

Level 4: Evaluation (Organizational Results). The creation of behavioral goals inside the LDPs completed by the participants, and new data from re-administration of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire to compare with the data from the original questionnaire would be enough evaluation for many training programs. However, simply comparing new data with old data regarding change in instrument-subscale mean scores does not tell us too much about what, if any, actual impact in the form of organizational outcomes occurred. According to Kirkpatrick, level four results “can be defined as the final results that occurred because the participants attended the program.” Results can come in the form of greater quality, enhanced production, less costs, increased sales and reduced turnover. According to Kirkpatrick, it is difficult to measure final results in leadership programs as results often have to be measured in terms of morale or other nonfinancial terms. Program managers may not find proof, but program managers will be looking for evidence.

One of the key performance indicators that the Utah DOC is addressing is employee turnover. If this variable can be decreased, the results can be measured in terms of dollar savings for the department. Many variables can affect employee turnover such as job satisfaction, employee morale and communication. These factors will be surveyed with instruments such as the Job Description Index, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire and the Prison Social Climate Survey. Measuring level four results and focusing on key performance indicators such as employee turnover is a strategy that all corrections departments at the federal, state and local levels could address.

The key performance indicators for phase two and three of the man-

agement development for the future training program may be different, however, Kirkpatrick’s four-level evaluation strategy will continue to guide the evaluation protocol. These are exciting times for the corrections field and particularly for NIC’s leadership and management development program series. If management and leadership development programs are not measured for organizational impact, it is simply a training exercise. Participants will likely return to their workplace and if asked by their supervisors, simply say they had a good time. The NIC Academy is focusing on raising the bar far beyond the first level of programmatic impact.

ENDNOTES

¹ Avolio, B.J. 2005. *Leadership development in balance: Made/born*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc. Mahway, N.J.

² Avolio, B.J. and F. Luthans. 2006. *The high impact leader: Moments matter in accelerating authentic leadership*. New York, N.Y.: McGraw-Hill.

³ Kirkpatrick, D.L. 1998. *Evaluating training programs: The four levels*. San Francisco: Berrett-Kochler Publishers.

⁴ Bass, B.M. and Avolio, B.J. 1995. MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire for Research. (Distributed by Mind Garden), Redwood City, Ca.

⁵ Bass, B.M. and Avolio, B.J. 1990. The implications of transactional and transformational leadership for individual, team, and organizational development.

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