Deconstructing Leadership Development

OEB20 & CCL Labs Community
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Nice to meet you this way!
The story of this session

It’s gotten complicated (wait, it always was...)

The history: Lesson of Experience research

Today: Learning8 proposed model

The future: who brings it all together?
The puzzle of (leadership) development is complicated...

Simple
(even simplistic)

This we can communicate, we can sell

Complicated
(even complex)

This is how it actually works
Revisit the past

So why look at something complicated as one thing, let’s deconstruct in what makes leadership development work, let’s revisit some research.
The days of yorn: 1982

We wanted to know: how do leaders really develop?
We started the ‘Lessons of Experience’ research.

When you think about your career as a manager, certain events or episodes probably stand out in your mind—things that led to a lasting change in you as a manager. Identify at least three “key events” in your career: things that made a difference in the way you manage now.

• What happened?
• What did you learn from it (for better or worse)?
Lessons of Experience research

- Challenging Assignments (55.8%)
- Other People (18%)
- Coursework (6.2%)
- Hardships (17.4%)
- Personal Life Events (2.6%)
70 was born

Note: we have a love/hate relationship with this model
But the research said much more, and was repeated over time

- Numbers vary a bit
- Not just any experience, formal course or relationship
Last time we did it

2011: cultural differences
Job Challenge Profile

- Unfamiliar Responsibilities
- New Directions
- Inherited Problems
- Problems with Employees
- High Stakes
- Scope and Scale
- External Pressure
- Influence without Authority
- Work across Cultures
- Work Group Diversity

Published in peer-reviewed journal
LEARNING TACTICS INVENTORY

- Accessing Other People: Gaining Assistance and Support to Solve Problems
- Taking Action: To Learn and Solve Problems
- Thinking: Constructed Largely Alone

Feeling: Emotions and Attitudes, How the Event Affects You
What we ended up saying

- Put experience central
- Be intentional about it

Employees are 2.6x more engaged when they are learning on the job. ¹

55% of employees do not regularly extract learning from their work. ²

The more time employees spend on challenging tasks, the higher their promotability ratings from bosses. ³

The top reported barrier to on-the-job learning is poor feedback from one’s manager. ⁴

²Corporate Executive Board (2014). *Building a Productive Learning Culture.*
Now

Let’s attempt to deconstruct how learning really happens (the strategies you need to put in place) that is more realistic, less simplistic, but still something we can handle.
We would argue the real superpower is the power to always learn and grow. But we seem to focus more on learning tools (like learning platforms), sources of learning (like 702010) and learning modalities (like live online or face to face), rather than the real success factors of development: the learning strategies we put in place.

This model serves as a guide of what learners should put in place for successful development.
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This proposed model tells us the learning strategies to put in place for success. They are all based on outcomes of the Lessons of Experience research (702010 model, Job Challenge Profile and Learning Tactics Inventory) + growth mindset.
How to make the most of this session

Either think of something you want to learn, get better at next year and use that as an example throughout the session

Or think about how AI can augment the deconstructed learning process
Keep an open and curious mindset
What are learning opportunities and cues around me?

• Like your inner child: wonder, ask questions with an open mind
• Serendipity learning: be open to it
• Randomness – ever tried the magic eightball?
• Does your filter bubble help or hinder your learning mindset?

Do “cool hunting” of what you find cool, surprises you, is unusual, etc.

Do the questionnaire on Growth vs. Fixed mindset (Carol Dweck).

Subscribe to blog feeds with an RSS-reader.
Maintain learning goals
Where should I focus my efforts to learn and grow?

• Different kind of goals (change how you act/form a habit, improve a skills, meet a target)
• Also ‘maintain goals’, not just set them, they are a living entity (re-group, re-prioritize, re-calibrate, increase)
• Who judges in how far the goals were reached?

Share what you are getting better at. (Make it social!)

SMART goals, or other goal templates to explicitly write it out, think it through.

Pledge to stick to a goal, and if you don’t...
Tap into expertise
How can I educate myself? Who can be an advisor?

• This we know how to make and sell and consume! (eg videos)
• Curated, recommended ... Content, content, content. Remember it’s just one piece of the complicated puzzle.

Check your ‘netflix of learning’ videos.

Books!

Sure, courses and workshops and all of that. Online, face-to-face, whatever...
Take on new challenges
In what ways do I need to stretch myself?

• We don’t learn from any experience: it needs to be challenging
• Real, real but safe, or simulated experience
• Do we all have access to challenging experience (this might be the new roadblock)

Do stretch assignments.

Do volunteering work in the community.

Get inspiration from the Job Challenge Profile.
Get feedback
What might I need to do differently? How will I know if it works?

• Layers of feedback: from your body (sensors), self-evaluation (me), social evaluation (you), business metrics (it)
• Interesting phenomenon: two-way feedback
• Feedback is better when timely, concrete (eg words, not a number), factual

Do a survey.

Have a habit of giving and asking for feedback.

What business metrics do you contribute to mostly?
Lean on others
Who can I rely on for support?

- Learning as a social process – who is in your learning circle?
- Interesting phenomenon: Rise of the peers (is this the real democratization of leadership development?)

Work with a coach on your workplace challenges.

Involves your boss in your development.

Have and be an accountability partner.
Acknowledge your feelings

How will I manage the discomfort of learning?

- There is a reason why we might fall back to ‘old habits’: they are much more comfortable
- Development is a process, also an emotional one

Celebrate small successes. (Make a list!)

Anticipate roadblocks and make ‘if this then that’ contingency plans.

Motivational quotes and reminders in your work space.
• Doing without thinking might be a waste of learning
• The trick is in comparing both successes and failures

Bullet journaling.

Reserve thinking time in your calendar.

Actually do After-Action Reviews.
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Now what?

So how can we make leadership development more realistic (versus simplistic), more intentional (versus leaving it to chances), more leader-driven (versus something L&D does to you)
Potential

- For busy managers: Don’t waste learning opportunity (scrap learning), be intentional about it. We have another model to deconstruct the learning process – the strategies to put in place
  - Give people another tool to be more in charge of their own development, more variety, select the tactics that work for them
  - People are accountable for putting in the deliberate effort, L&D is accountable for giving them the tactics and tools, and guidance
- For L&D: Measure effort, measure business outcomes, calculate the correlation
The biggest question of them all

Where will the point of integration be?

Leader (Learner)  
Provider  
L&D
Best-of-breed strategy or integrated bundle strategy

hbr.org/2020/12/how-long-can-a-company-thrive-doing-just-one-thing
Who does what? (Stephen Downed 2020)

https://halfanhour.blogspot.com/2020/12/institutional-support-for-personal.html
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So what was in the chat that we should talk about now?