

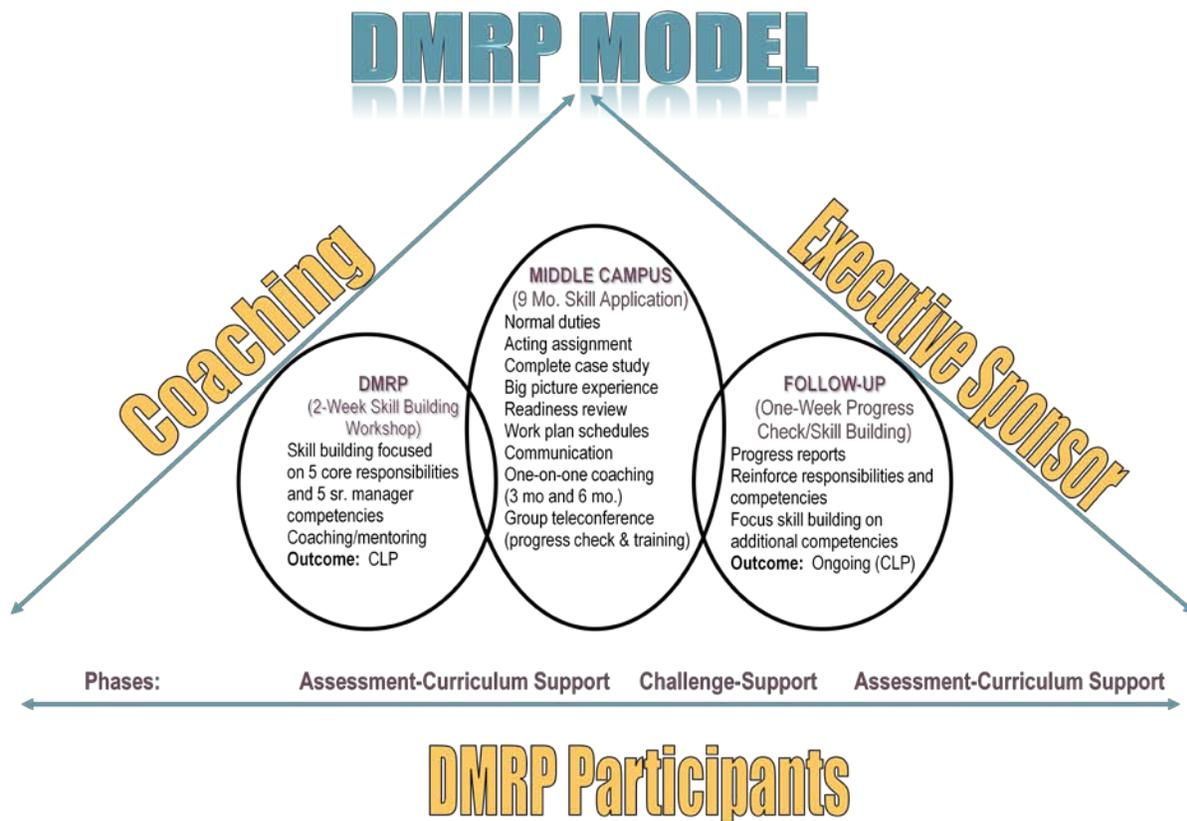
Department Manager Readiness: The Challenge, Design and Outcomes

The Challenge: A large, labor intensive organization required assistance to identify and develop front-line managers who were interested and motivated to move into department manager positions. The project included consulting input into the succession planning system; competency assessment; design and delivery of a multi-part leadership skills development program; and post delivery assessment of results

The Design: The program consists of three phases: 1) an eight-day training session, 2) a nine-month on-the-job development period, and 3) a one-week follow-up. The three phases are illustrated below.

How it Works:

The eight day training session is taught by an instructor team consisting of a Take Charge instructor and an executive from the client organization. The program can also include in-house training experts and/or exemplary internal managers from the client organization.



The training session combined with the nine-month middle campus period, provides for a robust learning experience. These are grounded in a number of developmental strategies designed to promote self-directed learning, provide rich developmental experiences, maximize the opportunity for experiential learning, enhance self-awareness, and build the confidence and competency to be ready to step into a department manager positions at the “ready” level.

Key components of this integrated and comprehensive leadership development approach include:

- Ongoing meetings and discussions with one’s manager to review the program and set learning goals
- Identification of a change project—which outlines a real and current opportunity to improve business results, employee satisfaction, and/or customer satisfaction. This change project is developed and planned during the initial training program and implemented during the nine month application period.

- Participate in a four-week acting assignment in the department manager position.
- Gain cross-functional experience.
- Gain experience in:
 - Workflow/inventory management
 - Managing multiple programs
 - Managing competing priorities
 - Mentoring or coaching managers
 - Writing performance appraisals for managers
 - Negotiation/conflict resolution
 - Readiness Review Process
 - Workforce planning (e.g. ,work plan/work schedules, etc.)
 - The LR process

- Feedback from organizational superiors and others regarding his/her stakeholder interactions
- Meet with the learning and education staff to identify resources that would help in achieving his/her career learning plan.
- Maintain a management journal (or log) that documents activities, outcomes, and learning during the middle campus period..

The specific objectives for the eight day training session include the following:

- Develop strategies for building on the strengths and minimizing the limitations of your unique leadership style.
- Use style modification strategies to meet the needs of others.
- Provide feedback that encourages development.
- Use the IRS coaching process to encourage others to improve performance, modify behavior, or assume additional responsibility.
- Apply techniques for facilitating productive change.
- Identify factors that affect efficient resource utilization.
- Identify strategies for building a stronger results focus in yourself and in your direct reports.

- Respond appropriately to the feelings and reactions of others.
- Use the basic communication skills of disclosure, feedback, and active listening to enhance and build relationships.
- Use 360° feedback report to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and actions to improve your effectiveness.
- Apply decision-making techniques to make timely, sound decisions.
- Develop a personal career learning plan that includes strategies and measures for enhancing your effectiveness.

Outcomes, Impacts and Results

Participants leave with a deep understanding of the skills and strategies necessary to manage managers, the confidence and competence to lead, and an updated learning plan continuing their development as they move forward. Tools and strategies provided during this session include the following:

- How to be both a courageous leader and a courageous follower
- How to delegate not only tasks, but to build leadership skill in others
- Leadership priorities and how to flex one's priority set in order to better influence, understand strategic conflict, and open up the decision making space
- How to influence from the middle
- How to use challenge as the opportunity for greatness
- How to tap into purpose, passion, and spirit at work in order to make a difference for self, group, and organization
- How to describe and communicate your leadership purpose/statement

Impact studies conducted one year after the close of the program find significant success in the application of program concepts in order to make a difference. Specifically 82-87% of participants reported using program concepts on the job to make a significant difference.

Additional highlights reported by participants:

- ❖ Using self-assessment, reflection, and feedback from others in order to identify strengths and developmental opportunities. As an example, participants report the following shifts in their leadership focus which impacted the work environment as well as people's capacity to do the work: From a hands-on approach to one that allows for more ownership, from controlling to negotiating, and from managing everything to coaching well-intentioned people.
- ❖ Promoting high performance through the use of skills that include feedback, coaching, and high-performance team strategies. A sampling of impacts and results included partnering with another organization and providing real time feedback and tracking in order to enhance quality, promote accountability, and ensure resolution of open issues; and the creation of an international technical team to resolve issues with a new program (work included the creation of procedures, worksheets, and review processes).
- ❖ Using influencing strategies that included style awareness/modification, EI skills, and negotiations skills in order to gain support, sell and implement ideas. Results included successfully selling and

implementing items that included: new and different meetings to address a number of issues and training that improved unit efficiency.

- ❖ Increasing workplace effectiveness and/or efficiency by using skills that include strategic thinking, change management, business acumen, and decisions making skills. Impacts included decreased phone time, and enhanced quality service.

Additional business outcomes and paybacks gained as a consequence of change projects included the following:

- ❖ Exceeding customer accuracy goals by over 5%.
- ❖ Significantly impacting backlog (closing 75% of open cases in one instance, and moving from 30% open cases to less than 3% in another).
- ❖ Development of a resource scheduling tool that saved roughly \$100,000 per year in salary expense.
- ❖ Streamlining a process that was paper-laden and required a lot of manual effort and a decrease in the amount of clerical resources needed while achieving a vast savings in paper usage as well