

Five leadership development suppliers share ideas on how to best prepare today's workplace leaders for tomorrow's successes.



LEADING DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS FOR TODAY'S LEADERS

By Ann Pace

Today's leadership development methods look much different from the approaches used decades ago. Technology innovations, a global workforce, and new generations in the workplace have contributed to a flatter organization in which successful leaders must influence others, adapt quickly to change, drive teamwork, and value relationships—all while remaining humble. The following suppliers have experienced this shifting leadership development landscape firsthand and understand what tools and techniques best empower leaders to effectively move their people and grow their businesses for the future.

Development Dimensions International

For Development Dimensions International (DDI), the “talent management expert,” leadership development is imperative to close the gap between where a business needs to go and the talent necessary to get there. DDI's comprehensive approach to talent management brings together all of the major strategies, processes, and activities—such as leadership development—required to systematically manage an organization's talent.

“Effective development starts with insightful diagnosis,” explains Jim Concelman, DDI's vice president of leadership solutions. “DDI leadership assessment and development systems are tightly linked and built on a common competency base. DDI assessments provide leaders—both formal and informal—with a comprehensive, job-focused view of their strengths and development areas, including a robust diagnosis of the core leadership behaviors and skills. Using engaging instructional techniques (such as case studies, simulations, and focused skill building), DDI development programs build proficiency in the essential skills and advanced capabilities.”



DDI's products and services span an organization's entire talent management life cycle through profile management, selection and assessment, leadership and workforce development, succession management, and performance management. These areas of expertise target every employee level, from individual contributors to the executive suite.

"Leaders at all levels struggle to build and maintain productive, trusting relationships with the people they manage, which leads to lower engagement, less innovation, and more difficulty with execution," Concelman observes.

The skills necessary for leaders to be successful in today's workplace are much different from those cultivated in years past. DDI's clients recently have adopted a "back to basics" mentality and are focusing on mastering essential soft skills such as effective communication and interpersonal skills.

"Research shows the value of focusing on the essential interaction skills first," says Concelman. "Leader proficiency in these skills is the foundation of a culture of engagement, collaboration, teamwork, and innovation. These skills are also the building blocks for more advanced skills and capabilities that leaders need as they move higher in the organization."

Inscape Publishing

Inscape Publishing, creator of Everything DiSC—the new learning tools based on the third generation of the research-validated DiSC assessment—understands how important it is to focus on the personhood behind a leader.

"There is a wealth of data available on how a leader's personality, priorities, and values can impact effectiveness," says Jeffrey Sugerman, CEO of Inscape Publishing. "Effective leadership is no longer just about simply driving results. It's about creating a culture that

promotes not only productivity, but also things like recognition, innovation, and a sense of stability. Our clients are looking at leadership from a whole-person or multidimensional perspective."

Inscape provides strategies for employees to better connect with their co-workers, thereby improving the overall organization culture and, ultimately, the business impact.

"In the assessment industry, self-awareness has always been essential," explains Sugerman. "But our new tools go past 'know thyself,' and focus on improving effectiveness with tips and strategies personalized to the individual. They take you from assessment to action faster and easier than ever."

The Everything DiSC suite of solutions develops critical interpersonal business skills, such as sales, leadership, frontline management, conflict management, and team building, for today's workforce. The Everything DiSC Work of Leaders training approach stimulates new conversations and perspectives regardless of one's prior knowledge or experience, encouraging leaders to understand the root of their own leadership behaviors. Another Everything DiSC tool, the 363 for Leaders, is Inscape's version of the 360-degree assessment. At more than 22 pages, the profile shows leaders how others perceive them, using easy-to-read visuals, descriptive data and feedback breakdowns, and three personalized strategies for leaders to implement to improve their effectiveness.

"One-size-fits-all approaches to leadership are a thing of the past," Sugerman adds. "Employees put a high premium on collaboration and humility—it's not just about power and charisma. Good leaders know their strengths, but they can also stretch beyond their personality comfort zones to be more effective."

The Marcus Buckingham Company

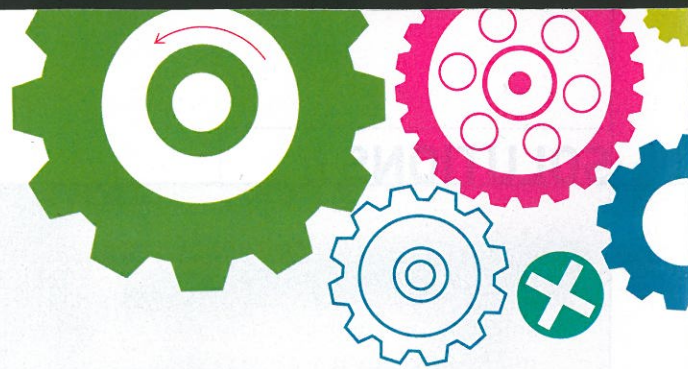
The Marcus Buckingham Company (TMBC) is all about strengths. It urges organizations to appreciate uniqueness and offers strengths-based tools such as Strengths Essentials and managerial and executive coaching, which treat individuals and companies as unique entities worthy of specialized development.

In terms of leadership development, Marcus Buckingham has observed two definitive changes in the workplace during the past few decades: The best leaders don't share the same behaviors and competencies, and leadership development doesn't happen during formal classroom training. "It happens in the work, of the work, and through the work," Buckingham says.

In response to this need for new approaches to leadership development, Buckingham published his new book and strengths assessment, StandOut. "Because leadership comes in many different forms, from people with many different talents and approaches, we've created StandOut first to capture the best techniques and practices from a wide range of leaders, and then to filter those practices to people whose strengths are a match for them," explains Buckingham.

StandOut unveils an individual's two key strength roles and provides practical advice on what to do to make the most of those roles. Each of the nine possible roles is described in the book, with strategies to make an immediate impact. TMBC also designed a StandOut app that, according to Buckingham, "provides a steady stream of new techniques when you need them as a leader, so that you can course-correct in real time."

For organizations seeking to best develop their leaders to drive future business growth, Buckingham concludes: "We are all focused on



innovation, and rightly so—it's what drives success. Innovation, properly defined, is simply a better way of doing things. Innovations are not a rarity; they're happening all the time within your organization. The best organizations will discover ways to harvest them and match specific innovations to the people who can use them best."

Situation Management Systems

Established 40 years ago, Situation Management Systems (SMS) is a global provider of communication and management training solutions. The company's Positive Power and Influence Program (PPI) equips people with the behavioral skills vital to getting their jobs done efficiently while keeping relationships intact. PPI empowers participants to influence others without the use of positional authority; manage and motivate nonperforming employees; lead others through rapid change and uncertainty; and become more effective team members and leaders.

"There's been a growing demand in the past 10 years for senior leaders to receive influence training," says Sherri Malouf, SMS president. "People are finally seeing that there isn't a magic silver bullet that makes someone a leader; instead, it is how you develop each of your relationships. Leadership is about influence—one relationship at a time."

SMS has continued to enhance PPI to cater to the needs of emerging leaders. Part of this evolution has included partnering with Robert Scott, general partner at Evolutions Strategists, to launch the program's newest component, Authentic You. "A huge piece of being able to influence effectively is to know who you are," explains Malouf.

"Authentic You works with managers and challenges them to examine their core values, their brand, and their vision to discover what they seek to inspire and what is their legacy,"

Scott says. The tool applies the concepts described in Scott's latest book, *Thinking Beyond Gridlock: Discovering the Potential of Authentic You*.

This charge for authenticity responds to the state of the 2012 workplace, and society in general, where distractions from technology and information overload abound. "We create the opportunity for you to be successful within the global evolution in which we exist today," Scott adds.

Such success affects how a company is perceived by its customers. "An organization's culture is directly proportional to the goods and services it produces: If you tell your customers you're going to create an outstanding experience, you better replicate that internally," Scott says.

Booz Allen Hamilton

Booz Allen Hamilton has been providing management and technology consulting services to government, commercial, and international organizations for nearly a century. While leadership best practices have remained steadfast, development methods continually fluctuate to better serve the ever-changing workforce.

"Events escalate suddenly and in unpredictable ways," says Lori Zukin, principal at Booz Allen Hamilton. "Our social and technological networks are becoming more complex. This requires leaders at all levels to focus on the enterprise as a whole and on building strong relationships."

Zukin explains that today's diverse workforce and emerging technologies require leaders with strong relationship skills and adaptability. Booz Allen's latest tool—social network analysis aimed at leaders—will examine a leader's relationships and identify areas for improvement in a powerful way.

The firm's main leadership development solutions include curriculum

design and delivery, assessments administration, coaching, succession management, and simulations-based immersive learning. In all of its endeavors, Booz Allen practices a "prime, experience, sustain" approach. Leaders identify their learning needs and orient toward behavior change; engage in an immersive, developmental experience; and receive support through coaching and feedback that extends the learning into the workplace. A multidisciplinary team, complete with leadership development professionals, industry experts, technology wizzes, and simulations gurus, customizes solutions for each organization.

In recent years, Booz Allen has observed a growing demand for workplace coaching. Its coaching services teach effective listening and questioning skills so that leaders can empower their staff to discover answers on their own.

Additionally, organizations are increasingly interested in real-life immersive learning experiences for leadership development. Booz Allen's Mission Leadership Simulations include one board game-based exercise that presents leaders with multiple decision tracks such as how to spend company resources or how to balance work demands with home life.

"The best simulations not only help individuals to understand from a cognitive perspective what is needed to be an effective leader, but also bring out the emotions and interpersonal behaviors that offer a complete leadership experience," explains Zukin.

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