

DEVELOPING LEADERS: THE 70-20-10 FRAMEWORK

To what extent can leaders be developed through training? Or through coaching? Or through on-the-job experience? The 70-20-10 framework developed by the Center for Creative Leadership provides useful insights into these questions.

Your first impulse might be to say: They all matter, and they all matter equally. What CCL discovered is that 70 percent of leadership development takes place through on-the-job experiences. Developing effective leaders is a multi-dimensional journey comprised of a variety of experiences over time. These experiences provide opportunities to demonstrate leadership of increasing scope, complexity and challenge.

Our own experiences also validate that most learning and true development (the 70 percent) results from well-designed stretch assignments and on the job growth opportunities. The balance occurs through frequent feedback and coaching (the 20 percent), and formal and informal training (the 10 percent).



The 70-20-10 rule was developed by Morgan McCall, Robert W. Eichinger and Michael M. Lombardo at the Center for Creative Leadership.

So, ask yourself: To what extent am I designing on-the-job experiences explicitly with an eye toward helping people? Almost any job assignment can be developmental if the right conditions are in place to make it a learning opportunity. Here are some approaches:

- a) Set the expectation that the manager will demonstrate a higher level of competency in their current scope of work (for example, creating a more open and engaging environment for employees to suggest improvements);
- b) Increase the scope or complexity of their job duties and key assignments;
- c) Enable the manager to interact with internal and/or external stakeholders with whom they have never interacted before. For example, inviting them to attend

- meetings with Legislative staff or elected representatives, or being directly engaged in higher level discussions of Department strategy;
- d) Assign special projects and high-profile stretch assignments. For example, ask people to lead or participate in a task force on using data more effectively or a project to integrate several programs into one. These can be powerful development experiences, particularly when framed as learning and growth opportunities;
 - e) Provide job shadowing and/or formal job rotation opportunities. For example, shadowing the Department director for a day of Legislative committee hearings. This kind of experience can meaningfully expand a developing leader's understanding of the organization and highlight a new set of learning challenges.

Applying the 70-20-10 framework is one of the key success factors in leadership development. Here are three more:

1. First, developing leaders requires a sustained organizational commitment and ongoing focus and investment;
2. Second, within every organization, clear ownership and accountability for leadership development, and more broadly talent management, is essential for sustained progress. Senior leaders need to understand that it is one of their most important responsibilities;
3. A third factor is communicating clear expectations for those in people management roles. Leaders at all levels greatly benefit from a clearly defined set of competency expectations that describe the skills, knowledge and behaviors critical for success. This competency roadmap is the foundation for leadership development plans and continuous feedback.

Ultimately, leaders emerge out of what we call a leadership culture, where people feel deeply engaged in the work and mission of the organization, are encouraged to see themselves as stewards, and feel empowered to make a difference. Creating this kind of culture is perhaps the most important factor in developing future leaders.