

CASE STUDY:



getAbstract as a Catalyst for Transformational Leadership

A prime contractor in aerospace systems and national security solutions and a leading provider of a broad range of communication and electronic systems, L-3 considers its commitment to providing innovative solutions one of its core missions. Don Ledbetter, corporate director of management and organizational effectiveness, shares his insights on the company's groundbreaking process of building a highly successful leadership development program. Using getAbstract as a source of business expertise during the program's creation and execution, Ledbetter and his colleagues designed a series of transformational activities that can turn good managers into effective leaders.



L-3-modified Bombardier™ Q400™ multi-mission aircraft (MMA)

The Need for a Leadership Development Program

When Ledbetter and a handful of other organizational development leaders across the company noticed that their team members' development goals were remaining stagnant from year-to-year, they decided to implement changes that would challenge and strengthen the company's leaders.

Ledbetter organized an action-driven group of colleagues, all of whom were interested in designing a program from scratch. Without a budget, a corporate training charter, or a staff, the organizational development professionals moved forward.

They were motivated by the knowledge that their efforts would benefit L-3 managers and leaders well into the future.

Without dedicated resources at their disposal, the design team functioned as subject-matter experts on different components that could be used in the program. getAbstract's library of summaries on leadership, coaching and training provided the design team with a vast selection of theories, data and analytics on practices and strategies.

Evidence-Based Management

The design team took a unique approach to building a leadership development program by adopting evidence-based management

as one of their core principles. "Rather than rely on experience or best practices – or good practices – we looked for evidence of effectiveness that worked," said Ledbetter.

By using getAbstract's library as a research tool, the program design team had access to a variety of studies of different approaches and strategies from experts and leaders around the world. The team examined scientific data and systematic reviews before selecting practices and programs that had evidence of facilitating in optimal learning and growth for participants.

Achieved Results

- The L-3 designers reported a program ROI of 28 times the investment (2011-2013)
- 55% of participants indicated significant improvement in business growth
- 77% of managers of the participants reported that the leadership development program met or exceeded their expectations
- 83% had a return on expectations of improved business results and more effective leadership capabilities

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Program Structure and Practices

Based on their research, the L-3 design team determined the program needed to be organized into four main components:

1. Assessment
2. Developmental Coaching
3. Core Learning Experience
4. Continuous Learning

The heart of the one-year program was the core learning experience, which consisted of two in-person multi-day programs held several months apart. Named the L-3 Executive Leadership Development Program (ELDP), the program designers ensured that participants were prepared for these sessions by sending them relevant getAbstract summaries to review in advance. Once the learning experiences were under way, instructors and the design team also used abstracts to complement their instruction and provide additional perspectives on relevant topics, giving participants a broader perspective on each subject.

Drawing from their research, the program designers discovered that education on its own isn't likely to change behavior. To deliver the desired results, the design team combined the educational initiatives with access to professional developmental coaches who worked closely with each program participant, before, during and after the core learning sessions.

“It's becoming ingrained in the culture of the business to use getAbstract as a way to keep the organizational members vibrant and aware of what's going on outside of their immediate business situations.”

- Don Ledbetter, corporate director of management and organizational effectiveness for L-3

Strength-based assessments also contributed to the success of participants. With research revealing that popular numerical assessments sometimes lead to a misdirection of focus, the program design team instead used assessments that identified each participant's top three strengths, as well as an area for development.

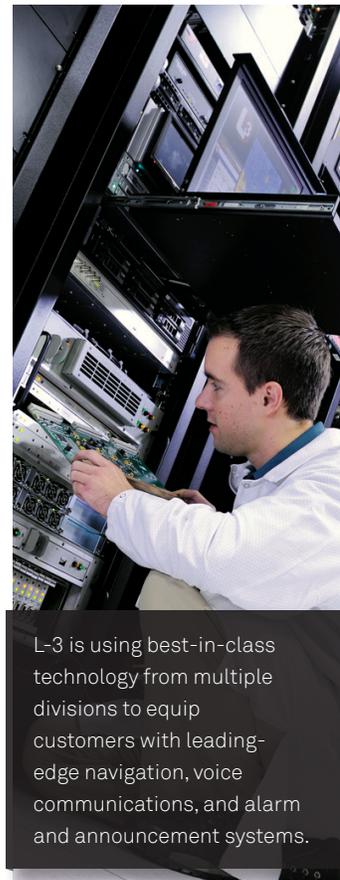
Following the in-person core sessions, the participants had monthly follow-up sessions (FaceTime, Skype or by phone) with their coaches and received relevant getAbstract summaries that addressed their developmental challenges. This follow up and review of essential takeaways prepared participants to continue developing their leadership skills, even as they faced new environments and challenges.

The Value of Mobile Learning

As part of the program, each participant received an iPad®, which program designers used to deliver learning and coaching getAbstract summaries. The team discovered that learning on a tablet is appealing because most professionals associate work with any task they carry out on their computers. “Evidence indicates that people are more effective when they separate the learning from work,” Ledbetter points out.

The program leaders also found that employees are more likely to bring home their iPads than their computers, adding to the benefits of using getAbstract on mobile devices. By examining and responding to the habits and preferences of their participants, L-3 reports that an impressive 87% of their getAbstract downloads occur on mobile devices, likely on the iPads provided for the training program.

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