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TRANSFORMING GRADUATE EDUCATION:

Developing Leaders for the 21st Century

Abstract

What would a graduate program look like if its purpose was to create transformational leaders? How and what would we teach? How and what would students learn? How would students work together? What would be the role of the faculty? This paper describes the creation and delivery of a graduate program that develops students as transformational leaders. The paper also outlines the paradigmatic shifts in design principles used in the program to achieve our purpose. The outcome assessment of students' leadership competencies at the conclusion of the program showed marked improvement. In a final reflection paper, students share the impact the program has had on transforming their lives.

Introduction

What if the purpose of graduate management education is to create transformative leaders instead of creating managers? This question drove us when we embarked on designing a new graduate leadership program at our university. We then asked another question, what if the purpose of education is to transform our students rather than teaching them knowledge and analytical skills? We knew these were daunting and lofty goals, and we wondered if we could design a program that could meet these goals given the challenges of the current academic environment.

Before we could answer such questions, we had to scan the current graduate management education landscape to identify the prevailing trends. The most dominant programs in graduate management education have been MBA programs. The MBA program has been in existence for more than 100 years—In 1908, Harvard University formally opened its Graduate School of Business Administration (Harvard Business School History, 2018), and the popularity of the MBA program has been on the rise since the 1980's. In 2014, MBA programs globally received more than 250,000 applications, and more than 100,000 degrees were awarded. In 2016, there were 786 AACSB accredited schools globally of which 541 were US or Canada based (AACSB Data Guide, 2017). This was almost an increase of more than 50% from 341 accredited programs in the US or Canada in 16 years (from 2000). Unfortunately, the path to such an increase in popularity has not been a smooth ride. Most MBA programs were originally designed to provide future administrators (the name "administration" in the degree is a clue, and Harvard's decision to name it business administration attests to this point) with analytical skills so that they could apply rational

management principles once they embarked on their careers. Such designing principles might have been appropriate in the turn of the century manufacturing environments where organizations were most interested in increasing organizational control and efficiencies (Taylor, 2014). But we are no longer in that stable and predictable business environment. Today's business environment is radically different from those of yesteryears. Our economy has shifted from a manufacturing to a knowledge/ service economy, and with this change the nature of work is more dynamic and organic. In addition, the business environment has gone from stable and predictable to one that is filled with disruptive and accelerated changes due to technological innovations, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and global changes. In response to such changes, management educators have been calling for a change in the MBA curriculum. In 1988, Porter and McKibben published an article that criticized MBA programs for focusing too much on analytical skills and not enough on non-analytical skills that employers were looking for from MBA graduates. There have been other criticisms including lack of leadership development, lack of adaptability, etc. (Crisp, 2018; Hansen, 2011; Parker, 2018).

MBA programs have not been standing still and have tried to change to address some of the criticisms. Most of the changes that have been implemented by MBA programs have been either incremental or evolutionary (Haslett, 2011; Stanford Graduate School of Business, 2016). So, although these changes are moving in the right direction, they have not mitigated the criticisms levied on the programs. Recent articles (Grey, 2004; Rubin & Dierdorff, 2011; Rubin & Dierdorff, 2013; Starkey & Tempest, 2009) on the MBA programs attest to this. In other words, such cosmetic changes have not been enough to address the critics of the MBA programs.

A review of the management education landscape confirmed to us that we need to drastically change the way we design and implement business graduate programs if we desire to achieve our own objectives of transforming our students into leaders that would be able to meet the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century.

Designing a Transformational Graduate Program

How do you design and build a graduate management program? It is easy to criticize and point out what is wrong, but it is often more difficult to change and make it right. Where do you start the process? We benchmarked existing MBA and leadership programs, we conducted focus groups and surveys, and we had many internal conversations. The more we explored, the more we came to the realization that incremental or evolutionary changes were not enough to accomplish our mission and objectives. The most decisive feedback came when our community stakeholders told us that we did not need another EMBA or traditional HR graduate program in the region. Emboldened with such feedback from our stakeholders, we convinced our administrators that we needed to shift our direction toward a different path, and we embarked on a journey to create an innovative program.

So, out of these efforts emerged our M.S. in Executive Leadership and Organizational Change (ELOC). The ELOC master's program is a 2-year, cohort-based program that caters to working professionals and managers, and it meets on one weekend per month (both Saturday and Sunday). Each cohort consists of a maximum of 25 students of diverse industry and discipline backgrounds. They are organized into teams for the duration of the program, with first-year teams reorganizing in the second year to provide the context of change. The program culminates with a two-week international experience to Asia (Korea, Japan, and China), a class project on the topic of their choice, and individual graduating projects.

The transformational leadership aspect of the program starts with self-transformation, where students are given the opportunity to learn more about themselves to increase their self-awareness and to create a personal vision of individual change. Students engage in their planned action steps to achieve their personal vision during the 2-year program. The emphasis on experiential/action learning as well as teamwork in the program also provides students with ample opportunities to develop their empathy and influence competencies and also to engage in peer coaching to practice developing team members. Furthermore, the emphasis on organizational change provides students additional opportunities to learn the art of influence and the process of organizational transformation. Students also engage in a public engagement practicum to apply their learning in transformational leadership in helping non-profit organizations. Finally, the intellectual and conceptual framework on global leadership and sustainability provides the context for students to learn how leaders can transform their mindset to create a new global vision for business and sustainability.

The curriculum is designed to integrate four different levels of transformation: self, team, organization, and global environment. Imagine a concentric circle with the concept of self in the center of the circles while teamwork, organization, global environment extends out in the concentric circle (See Figure 1). With such an integrated design, the sequence of courses was created to initiate the transformational process from the middle of the concentric circle and to expand outward (See Table 1 for the list of the courses in the program).

Figure 1. Integrated Framework of Curriculum Focus and Design

The ELOC program takes students through a transformative learning experience. According to Mezirow (1991), the transformational learning process consists of encountering a dilemma, making meaning, and achieving a transformative insight that results in changes in behavior in real-life. We draw upon the analytic framework developed by Debebe (2011) that expands the current conceptions of the transformational learning process. The ELOC students experience these same four processes as they learn and develop in the program (Table 2); they experience disorienting dilemmas, they work to make meaning of their experiences, they achieve insight when they see how their work helps them develop and grow, and they translate that learning into practice both at work and outside of the work environment.

Table 1
List of Courses in the ELOC program

Year/Semester	Courses
First Year	
Fall	Leadership Assessment and Development
	Teams and Conflict Management
Spring	Action Research Methods
	Creating High Performing Organizations
Summer	First Year Public Engagement Practicum
Second Year	
Fall	Organization Strategy Development and Systems Thinking
	Organizational Consultation
Spring	Managing Organizational Change
	Global Leadership and Sustainable Change
Summer	Graduation Action Research Project

Students in the ELOC program encounter disorientating dilemmas from a variety of sources. For some, it is the experience of being back in graduate school after many years out of the classroom. They encounter new concepts and take on challenging assignments. They are forced to work in a team where they all have the same level of authority and power, many of the students are in leadership roles where they are used to being able to rely on positional power to get things done. They are challenged to reflect from and learn from their experiences while giving and receiving honest feedback from those who want to help them develop and grow.

Table 2
ELOC Stages of Transformational Learning

Encounter Dilemma	Make Meaning	Achieve insight	Translate to practice
Being back in graduate school	Reflection	Recognize need for change	Implement at work
New concepts	Interaction with instructors	Commitment to change	Projects for student organizations
Being forced to work with peers	Support from team	Acquire the tools needed to lead change	Use in ELOC teams
Challenging assignments	Culture of the program		Use with friends and family
Reflection			
Feedback			

Students make meaning through their monthly reflection papers where they reflect upon and try to make sense of their experience so they can put their learning into action in the future. Interaction with instructors in the classroom, during individual discussions, and through feedback on reflection papers and other work help students to understand and make meaning of their experiences and in many cases, the strong emotions they experience. Student teams are a great source of support and assistance with making meaning of their experience both inside and outside of the class in their work and personal lives. Students become support systems for each other in all aspects of life. Finally, the culture of the program encourages a focus on learning over performing, so students get into the practice of reflecting on and making meaning from their experiences.

Students achieve insight from their experiences, their reflection, the feedback they receive, and their observations of other's development. They come to recognize that they need to change to become more emotionally intelligent and to become more effective leaders. They come to understand what and how they need to change, and they follow through on the commitment they made when joining the program to develop as a leader

Finally, they take their learning and development and translate it into practice both at work and in their non-work lives. They immediately implement their learning at work, sometimes as soon as the day after a class meeting. During the program, students complete projects for their own organizations as they learn about and apply leadership concepts and theories. They apply their learning in their own ELOC teams as they learn how to effectively work together to complete projects, provide feedback, support each other, and engage in constructive conflict. As they move through the program, many students share how they are using their newly developed and improved emotional intelligence with family and friends in their non-work lives.

The ELOC program incorporates this theory of transformational learning into the program design with very specific design guidelines. In fact, these design guidelines became our core values for the graduate program. What quickly became apparent is that the radical departure of some of these design principles from typical and normal graduate management programs meant that we had to reframe the basic structure and execution of the program. In other words, we needed a paradigm shift from the structure of more traditional academic programs to embed our values and integrate the design principles into a successful program.

Those shifts were:

- Shift from management focus to leadership focus
- Shift from performance focus to learning and development focus
- Shift from knowledge and analytical skill focus to whole student development focus
- Shift from course/discipline focus to integration focus
- Shift from theory to practice focus

In the subsequent sections, we will provide a detailed description of how such shifts were made and how the core design principles were used to create and implement the program features.

Shift from Management to Leadership. As noted earlier, the twentieth century approaches to leading organizations focused on the analytical skills needed to apply rational management principles in a mostly manufacturing environment. Effective leadership in today's disruptive technological environment (Dyer et al., 2019; Weinberger, 2019) is based on human relationships instead of the transactional approach of past management practices (Daugherty & Wilson, 2018; Lee, 2018; Polson & Scott, 2018).

Transformational leadership is one specific approach that is congruent with the needs of today's organizations. Transformational leaders motivate followers to do more than originally expected through loyalty, trust, and respect for the leader (Yammarino, et. al, 2005). Transformational leadership consists of four behaviors: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985.) Idealized influence means following through on commitments to gain the trust of followers. The leader creates a clear view of the future and help followers see how they can support that vision through inspirational motivation. Through intellectual stimulation, transformational leaders create an environment where followers can challenge assumptions and be creative. Finally, transformational leaders recognize the needs of subordinates and provide support through individualized consideration (Colbert, Kristof-Brown, Bradley, & Barrick, 2008). The ELOC program helps students to move toward greater levels of transformational leadership.

The works of Goleman (1988) and Boyatzis (1982, 2013) on emotional and social intelligence provide a framework of competencies that are necessary to develop effective relationships. Effective leaders have highly developed competencies in self-awareness, self-management, awareness of the emotions of the others, and effective relationship management. The creation of effective relationships requires that leaders are aware of and able to manage their own emotions and that they are aware of and able to manage the emotions of others. The ELOC program focuses on the development of emotional and social competencies as the core of the program. When students enter the program, they receive a 360-degree evaluation of their competencies. Next, they develop a plan for developing their competencies during their time in the program. Students are asked to reflect upon their competency use and development in a monthly reflection paper, forcing them to stay focused on their leadership development. The learning plan puts the student in charge of his or her development. This self-directed approach to personal change is one reason that students leave the program transformed. Each student decides which competencies are most important to his or her future success. The student develops specific goals and action plans to move toward the development of the competencies. Both the instructors and the team members support the student goals and plans. Team members may provide feedback to each other on their progress on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. As the groups develop into high performing teams, members take responsibility for helping each other develop their leadership competencies. They practice coaching and mentoring (relationship-management competencies) with their team members much the same way they will with their direct reports.

Students are encouraged, and required, to take a leadership role in their experience and in their cohort. They serve on the social committee, the international committee, the cohort project committee. They must take a leadership role in their team projects, in their team development, and in their resolution of conflict. The team structure provides a unique experience for students to move a team through creating a plan, organizing the team to create a product, leading the team to success, and then reflecting on the extent to which the team met its goals, all functions of leadership. However, since team members are peers, students must develop forms of influence that are not based on formal positional power. They are challenged to engage in the behaviors of transformational leaders without the support of a formal organizational structure or authority. Students are empowered to find their personal approach to leadership. The trust developed in the team provides a supportive environment in which to try out approaches, get feedback on their impact, and then try again to lead effectively.

Shift from performing to learning and development focus. One of the key shifts in the program was to focus on learning and development rather than performing. To create a culture of learning and development, we realized that we had to shift away from the dominant culture of performance and competition, which is what we typically observe in traditional MBA or graduate management programs. The culture of performance is usually defined by elements in the system that focus on outcomes or results. So, a focus on grades (Becker, Geer, & Hughes, 1995) or evaluative feedback would be an example of focus on performance.

There is nothing wrong with focusing on performance. We all focus on performance at some point in our academic program or at work. However, it is often the case where learning and performance collide and are in conflict (Edmondson & Singer, 2008). In addition, various studies under different contexts have shown that a learning focus ultimately leads to positive performance improvement in the long run.

Since the ability to learn offers certain long-term benefits, such as adaptability, continuous improvement, and innovation, we wanted to encourage this focus in students. This approach replaced behaviors in the performance culture such as; focusing on routine and repetitive activities rather than experimenting and focusing on narrow course

requirements and playing by the rules to achieve higher performance. One indication of a performance culture is exemplified by a typical student question - "What do I have to do to get an A?" In addition, greater stress and anxiety will often be displayed by students and greater competitive behaviors will be generated if their performance is graded on a curve.

On the other hand, a culture of learning and development is usually defined by elements in the system that focus on discovery, curiosity, novelty, and growth. Since such a focus requires risk-taking behaviors and experimentation often leads to potential failures, a culture of psychological safety is also needed to support the culture of learning and development (Mezirow, 1991; Edmondson, 2018; Weinzimmer & McConoughey, 2012). In addition, learning can also negatively impact short-term performance and penalize students in both grades and team efficiency. In a performance culture, safety is built into the mode of operations since students will often take a safe route in order not to jeopardize their performance. Alternatively, in a culture of learning and development, we want students to try new things and expand their horizons. In addition, the focus on development places the emphasis on students' change. The goal of the program is to help students develop and grow into transformative leaders. In addition, the concept of developing the whole student is often embedded within the growth and developmental model.

So, what did we do to create a culture of learning and development and a culture of psychological safety? We eliminated quizzes or tests because we wanted students to focus on the learning and application of concepts instead of memorizing concepts and regurgitating them on the test. We also made one of the main assignments a reflective activity where students reflect on their experiences, and the grades are based on their learning from experience. So, even if the actual performance might be considered a "failure," the experience is considered a success as long as the student learns from the experience.

Leadership and personal assessments are also done with a focus on learning and development. None of the assessments are used for evaluation or grades; they are strictly used to increase student self-awareness. We also focus on providing formative feedback to our students rather than evaluative feedback. The program includes a monthly team feedback session, so that students can receive formative feedback not only from the faculty of the program but also from their team members.

In addition, during the first semester of the program, we try to supplement the culture of learning with culture of inquiry. So, rather than presenting a topic as proven theories or facts, we presented the topic as a starting point of exploration and discovery. So, instead of creating the convergent and conforming culture, we tried to create a culture of inquiry and divergence that helps our students to focus more on learning over performing.

Students take risks and experiment with their behaviors in the program because of the emphasis on learning over performing. Soon after the program starts for each cohort, some students start to yell out "It's all about learning" to other students. After a while, it became the battle cry of the students whenever they are faced with a situation that calls for learning over performing.

Shift from developing knowledge and analytical skills to developing the whole student. Most management graduate programs are focused on developing knowledge analytical skills. This seems odd given that employers over the year have asked for students to demonstrate more "soft" skills (Porter and McKibbin, 1988). Why does this focus persist even though employers want something else?

One reason might be the type of training faculty members receive in their doctoral programs (Mitchell, 2007). In a typical doctoral program, doctoral students are trained to become researchers, not leaders or even managers. In fact, we often hear of anecdotal stories of doctoral students advised by their faculty advisers to avoid teaching assignments or any other activities that detract from time to research. Also, the general academic culture seems to favor theory

over practice and research over application. We call this research envy, and it seems like this is a common exercise for business schools to go through when a new dean appears in the college or immediately after AACSB visits ("Business Schools," 2007; Thomas & Wilson, 2011).

In contrast, our program focuses on the student across roles; the professional role, the personal role, and the relational (family, etc.) roles all become part of the program so that students can focus on developing their whole self. Students develop professionally as well as personally. They develop hard skills as well as soft skills. There is no reason for the educational experience be limited to one area rather than multiple areas. In brain science, we have come to discover that we have both left and right hemispheres. While they are connected via neural pathways, one area of the brain can be developed more than or less than the other. We propose that instead of developing only one side of the brain, how about if we develop both sides of the brain?

Shift from specific disciplines to an integration focus. The ELOC program is more than a list of courses. It is a systematic approach to developing leaders that was created with intention to develop transformational leaders. The program is based on the latest adult learning framework of ACT. The A is for action learning. The program emphasizes the importance of experiential and active learning with a focus on public engagement. The C is for competency development. The student's emotional and social competencies are developed during the entire two-year program. Finally, T is for teamwork. ELOC incorporates teamwork and learning about teams into all facets of the program. Students work in teams for a full year and then switch to new teams in year two.

The program design, choice of content, readings, activities, application, reflection, coaching, etc., all work together to move the student through a process that creates personal and professional transformation. The program philosophy extends across all classes. Emotional and social competencies are the basis for leadership development in the program. Throughout the program, students work to develop competencies in self-awareness, self-management, awareness of other's emotions, and relationship management. Students provide feedback to each other on a regular basis and a team feedback session is scheduled during each weekend session. As previously described, students reflect on their experiences on a regular basis. Another competency that student develop is coaching and mentoring. Students are given a plethora of opportunities during the program practice coaching and mentoring in their teams and in the cohort throughout the program.

The program includes ten classes and instructors who all must buy into the program philosophy. The program director is charged with safeguarding the systematic experience of the students. While the content of the courses is different each semester, the emphasis on developing leadership competencies and the importance of transformational leadership is consistent across courses. How do transformational leaders develop high-performing organizations? How do transformational leaders engage in and evaluate action research? How do transformational leaders analyze and implement strategy? How do transformational leaders lead change in themselves and others? How do transformational leaders lead in a way that is sustainable and globally relevant?

The application process requires aspiring students write three essays about themselves and the reasons they want to be in the program. Their references provide feedback on whether they will be successful in the program. These busy leaders with families and full lives give up one weekend a month and countless hours in between for one reason. They want to become outstanding leaders. They want to develop their ability to lead their organizations through the change that is part of every day. They want to help their people and their organizations succeed. As they move through the program, they transition to a desire to help their class members succeed and to help the program continue to grow and change people's lives. They engage in selecting the new cohort of students by participating in the admissions committee. As

alumni, they commit to mentoring incoming students and to raising funding for scholarships for future ELOC students. ELOC is much more than a set of ten courses. It is a systematic plan and "place" to transform people into outstanding leaders.

Shift from theory to practice focus. Traditional graduate programs often focus on theory and the empirical testing of theory in a specific discipline. Evidence-based management (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006) is an important step forward in learning how to effectively lead an organization. However, knowledge is not enough when it comes to leadership. It is one thing to know how to give effective feedback – we can develop a guideline for feedback based on evidence, it is another thing to follow the list of guidelines when we are in a face to face interaction with a real, emotion-laden, person. Developing outstanding leaders requires a shift from a focus solely on theory, to an emphasis on helping leaders turn theory into effective practice.

ELOC provides students with reading materials about evidence-based management practices so that they have access to the data about leadership. The program director and instructors are charged with finding materials that present evidence-based materials in a format easily accessible to the students. The emphasis in the class and in the assignments, is on using that information and applying it to a work setting immediately.

As noted earlier, students are required to reflect on their experiences and their learning after each class weekend. They reflect on the tools they attempted to use, the evidence-based theory that they tried to apply, and to determine why their efforts did or did not have the intended impact. Students can solicit feedback from their team and instructor on their perceptions of the experience as either participants or observers in the experience. Based on the feedback they receive and the results of their reflective process, students can plan to use the same approach (if the outcomes were as intended) or a different approach (if the outcomes was not as intended) in the future (Kolb, 1984).

The active and experiential learning process is repeated over and over. Students receive feedback on their performance, choose how and whether to adjust, and then try again. With the support of their team, the cohort, and the instructor, students feel that they have a safe environment in which to keep practicing until they feel confident in their ability to apply theory appropriately. The growth of emotional and social competencies goes a long way in supporting their journey in becoming outstanding leaders. They need to be aware of their emotions as they engage with another person, team, or the material. Leaders need to be able to manage their emotions in stressful situations before they can effectively use those evidence-based practices. Before a leader can effectively engage in a relationship with others, she needs to be able to manage herself by becoming self-aware and by developing the ability to manage her own emotions.

Next, a leader needs to be able to read the emotions he is creating in others. Ideally, he will have a relationship with the person he is interacting with, i.e. a direct report or someone he works with on a regular basis. She should have already anticipated how the other person would respond to the interaction they are going to have based on her existing knowledge from the relationship. Once the encounter begins, she should be looking for signs of how the other person is responding based on non-verbal as well as verbal cues. If the leader's read of the situation indicates that the other person is becoming overly stressed by the encounter, he should adapt his approach or at least prepare himself for the reaction he might encounter. While a theory can suggest the best approach, and provide information about how the context will influence the effectiveness of different approaches, an effective leader must be able to determine how best to respond in the moment based on her own emotions, her read of the other person, her relationship with the other person, and her ability to effectively apply relationship-management competencies. The ELOC program provides the knowledge about evidence-based practices and, more importantly, the time, support, and culture

necessary to practice and develop competencies.

Program Outcomes

Do the ELOC program design principles make a difference? No matter how elegant and innovative the concept and design of the program might be, what really matter is the outcomes that students experience. In other words, a main proof of the pudding lies in the outcomes that students experience. To that end an outcome study was conducted to test the effectiveness of the program. The program received approval from the institution's human subjects institutional review board to collect and analyze all student assignments. Students sign a consent form at the beginning of the program giving instructors permission to share research on the program. The total sample size was 155 ELOC students from 2008 to 2014 graduates. The average age for the overall sample was 39.31 and students had 12.6 years or work experience at the time of entry to the program. There were 82 females with an average age of 38.77 and 12.18 years of experience and 73 males with an average age of 39.92 and 13.07 years of work experience at the time of entry to the program. There was no statistical difference among males and females in terms of age and work experience.

The Emotional and Social Competency Inventory (ESCI) from Hay Group was administered twice - both at the time of entry to the graduate program and at the time of graduation- to measure students' competencies in emotional and social intelligence. Hay Group's ESCI is a 360-degree feedback survey designed to assess an individual's emotional and social intelligent competencies. The ESCI is highly correlated with students' overall capability. Since competencies are defined as "underlying abilities that leads to outstanding performance (Boyatzis, 1982), the total combined score for the competencies can be an effective indicator of one's capabilities. The ESCI collects data on both self-assessment and assessment from others including supervisor, peers, subordinates. Because of the data on the questionable validity of self-assessment data, we used others' assessment at the time of entry versus graduating to ascertain whether students have improved during the program (Taylor, Wang, & Zhan, 2012; Taylor, 2014). The results indicated that the graduating score ($M = 49.80$) was significantly higher than the entry scores ($M = 48.85$) – $t = -3.437$, $p < .01$). In other words, students clearly demonstrated a higher level of competence at the time of graduation than at the time of entry.

Although the quantitative data suggest that students demonstrated improvement on their competencies, it does not say anything about what type of experience they had during the program. Did the students indeed experience the program as it was intended? At the end of the program, students were asked to assess their own perception of change by writing a self-reflective paper. This final paper in the program asked students to describe in general what they had learned and how they were changed during the program in general. These questions were intentionally posed as open-ended and did not focus on any specific areas of the program. Thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998) of the papers revealed that students did experience the program as it was designed. The following are quotes taken from student reflection papers as they graduated from the program.

Shift from management focus to leadership focus.

> My, what a difference a quick two years can make in a person. The ELOC program has taken a seasoned corporate veteran like myself and transformed him into a leader; a real leader, not just a manager or a leader of a small team. The ELOC program has taught me how to effectively lead in every aspect of my life; home, work, community, and social life. That is one amazing program, if you ask me!
>
> Overall, I feel as if the ELOC program has repositioned me for success. I've been inspired and I've been challenged. I've had

> fun, I've grown and more importantly, I've changed. I feel as if the very things including being quiet, reserved and somewhat shy, that made me feel to some extent insecure and vulnerable, were the very things that the ELOC program identified and helped me to become a victorious leader over. I have an awareness of myself that didn't exist to the degree that it does now, along with the knowledge and skills to lead the next generation in my area of influence.

Shift from performance focus to learning and development focus.

> The ability to learn verses judge has changed my entire life outlook. The ability to see others as different as oppose to being seen as wrong has also changed my level of peace, so my confidence has grown in "whom I am". Overall, ELOC program allowed me to operate and share my life experiences in a safe environment, so I am able to express my thoughts. Therefore, I build trust much faster than before I joined the program.
>
> I am a different person as a result of the program. I understand who I am, and why. I have taken new risks, by allowing myself to be vulnerable in the area of relationships. Through this journey, I have developed new relationships, made new friends both at work and outside of work. I have gained a new perspective on how others view me, and what I can offer them. I am, overall less judgmental, and more conscious of the expectations I place on myself, and sometimes how I project them on others. My focus is understanding the differences that others have that are fun and interesting, instead of projecting my perceptions of what should be on them..

Shift from knowledge and analytical skill focus to whole student development focus.

> ELOC was not just a master's program, it was a life changing program or event for me. I cannot imagine any other educational program that changes your life and personal behavior's so dramatically. I came into the program one way and after two years you come out a better leader and a better person. What educational program out there today gives you that kind of ROI. None that I know of…
>
> I have changed personally in many ways due to ELOC. Because of my increased focus on empathy and teamwork, I am a better boss, better mother and better wife as a result. I realize now that exhibiting empathy is not a sign of weakness, but it is necessary emotional competency that has helped me personally. When I started ELOC, I only believed the changes would impact me professionally, but I have seen them improve my personal life as well.

Shift from theory to practice focus.

> The very interesting thing about it all is that I am starting to see with my own eyes the positive impact I have had on my team and in my department. What is more satisfying is that others have made positive comments to me (and to my director) that my leadership has been a good change for the department and the staff I lead and serve. As a result, I am seeing how I have grown, changed and helped others to grow as well.
>
> I have been told by many at work, both peers and subordinates, that I have become much more approachable and comfortable to talk to. I've even been told by one peer that I'm acting more like a human being

Lessons Learned

What did we learn from the program now that we

have had a chance to observe the results for ten years? First, the design and implementation are effective based both on the results of the competency assessments shown in the earlier section, and second through students' perceptions of their own growth and development.

The tripartite approach to program development is mandatory. In other words, begin with certain learning principles that shape the curriculum, and then be intentional in designing the program components and culture of the program, and then pursue perfection in executing the program.

If you want to teach knowledge and analytical skills, the current MBA programs are well suited to do so, but if you want to teach transformational leadership, you need a transformational program as well. The life-changing experiences that students refer to and discussed in their quotes do not come from learning about finance, accounting, and other content-based courses. We are not proposing that these courses are not worthwhile endeavors, but the aim and focus of our program are different from typical graduate management program, and thus different design and processes are needed.

One of the most important lessons we learned is that process and culture trump content and structure of the program. Without the right type of process and culture that focus on relationship-building to support leadership development, it would be rather difficult to transform our students. In short, even though you might have the right type of curriculum or structure, the way students experience the program is largely determined by the process and culture. Processes can also help integrate different facets of the program so that students can experience the program as an aligned whole. Students explain:

> The essence of my ELOC experience has been amazing and life changing. This program has served as a catalyst and roadmap for me personally and professionally. I have loved the learning but also the networking with students and the faculty. For me, ELOC, has been the jumper cables that have started my leadership engine!

Another lesson learned is that even though it takes a vision to create the program, it takes persistence and perseverance to bring the program into fruition. It took several years of hard work and overcoming resistance from several stakeholders to launch the program. Some stakeholders, including faculty and administrators, wanted to play it safe or go with what's most comfortable or available. Some questioned the academic rigor of the program given the unusual delivery system (monthly weekend program) as compared to traditional delivery system (weekly 3-hour courses). In addition, some questioned the lack of quantitative (or rigorous) courses and shift toward more human-relationship oriented courses.

Finally, can the program be transferrable? What would be required for the program be transferrable to other institutions of higher learning? Clearly having core members of faculty who share the common vision and competencies to teach the program are necessary. This might also be a limitation of the transferability—the limited availability of faculty who can straddle the space between theory and practice. Given the fact that current doctoral program training in business places a strong emphasis on research over a focus on practice and pedagogy (Mitchell, 2007), it might be challenging to find faculty who can design and deliver such transformational program.

The most important thing we have learned though is that success brings additional support and resources from the administrations in the university. Even though others might not recognize the design of the program or the effort it takes to deliver the program, they do recognize success in terms of students' feedback and enrollment numbers. However, we caution against rapidly expanding the program or diluting the quality of the program to increase enrollment. Transformative education most of all needs to be sustainable, and it takes tremendous effort and care to deliver a quality program that allows students to transform from a caterpillar to a butterfly who can spread its wings.

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