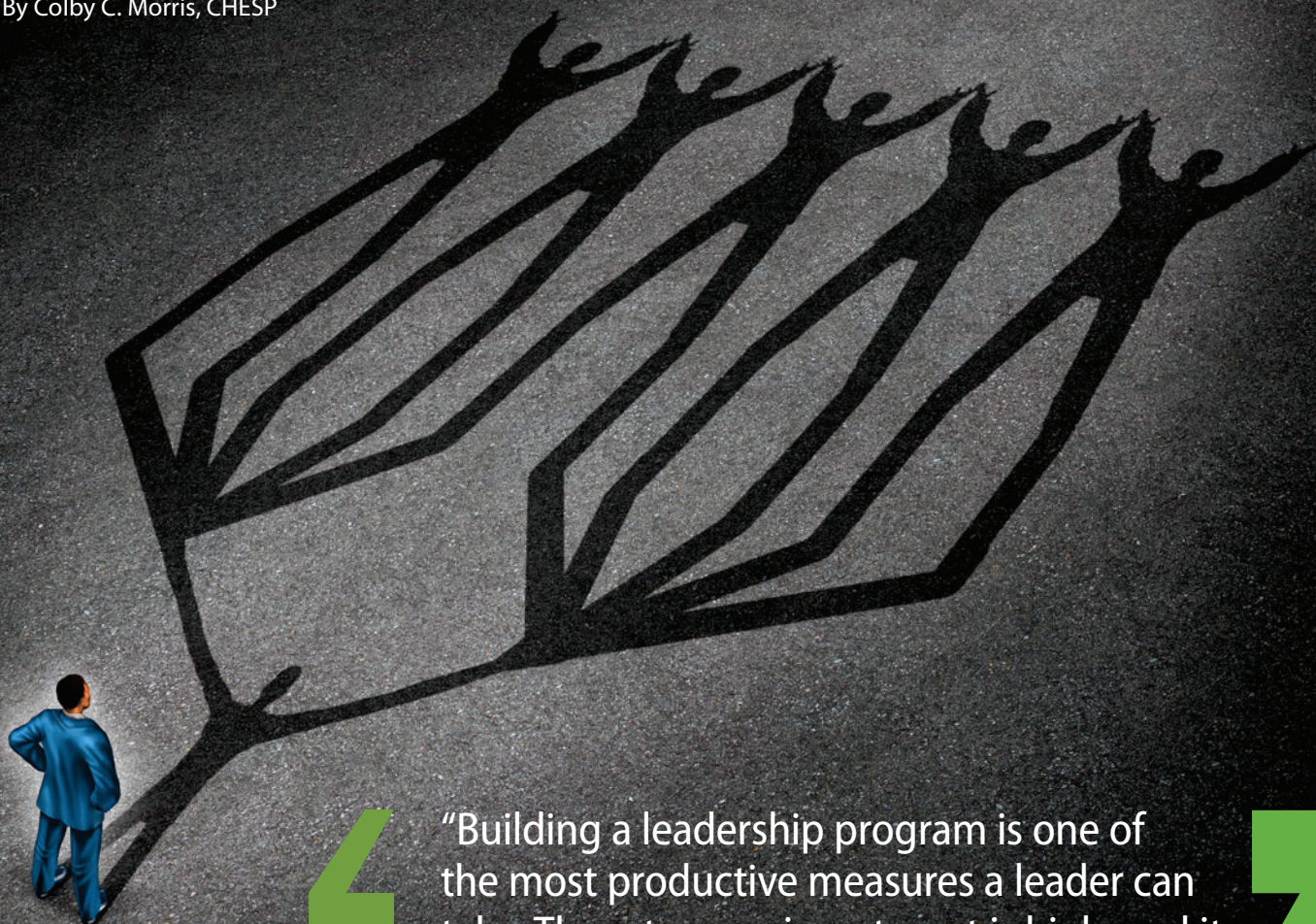


BUILDING LEADERS

How and Why You Need to Develop a Leadership Training Program

By Colby C. Morris, CHESP



“Building a leadership program is one of the most productive measures a leader can take. The return on investment is high, and it greatly increases the leader’s effectiveness.”



The most important aspect of a leadership training program is realizing that you need one. Leaders who try to do it all without investing in the intentional growth of other leaders are either egotistical or about to burn out. Regardless of staff size, leaders can and must create more

leaders. Leaders must recognize those who should be prepared for the next level of leadership and create a plan to get each of them to that destination. It is a very intentional process, designed to take a leader from where they are to where they could and should be.

If I asked you to think about your most impressive employee—the one you wish

you could clone—who would it be and why? Without knowing that person, I would say because they produce, they are always there and they lead by example. Am I close? If you could clone that person, would you? We all have that one person, and if the rest of our staff is not like that one person, then unfortunately, the reason why is facing us in the mirror. It is because they don’t have a

way to get there. We need a plan to create more leaders.

Leadership training programs are a lot like exercise. You get out of it what you put into it. It is an investment in time and energy that produces phenomenal results if applied. Whether you have managers, supervisors or only the frontline staff that report to you, your job as a leader is to begin developing more leaders. That doesn't mean you promote people into higher positions. Leadership isn't about *position*. Leadership is about *influence*. Many leaders do not realize they are leaders or that they can become a better one. They believe leaders are just born that way. The truth is, with the right drive and training, leaders can be created.

Introducing leadership principles

Begin with two steps. The first is to introduce leadership principles. Start by using a great quote by a leader you admire and have a discussion about that topic with the one you want to develop. What does it mean? How can it apply to what they do? Begin to feed their mind and help them to start thinking differently and asking better questions. Help them to think like a leader would think. Do this weekly. Every week have a new quote or a new article to read. Be consistent and intentional about the meeting.

Delegate responsibility

The second step is to delegate responsibility to that person. Do not delegate just a task, but a *responsibility*. Give that person something to be "in charge" of owning. Maybe it is to make sure that a particular job (not done by them) is completed daily or weekly. They are the reporting person. Perhaps you want them to start presenting particular information at shift meetings, but owning and deciding what that information will be. These stepping stones will help guide this person to walk down a different path than what he or she was walking. These are the first steps to leadership.

Leadership nourishment

The other essential piece of a leadership training program is to make sure that you are feeding yourself the same leadership nourishment. You must take in what you want to reciprocate. You need to invest in yourself as a leader and continue to grow.

QUIZ TIME!

We're all leaders, but in order to maximize your effectiveness as a leader and better understand your style, take the quiz available at www.yourleadershiplegacy.com/assessment/assessment.php, titled *The Leadership Legacy Assessment: Identifying Your Instinctive Leadership Style*.

Read books, take classes, read blogs, listen to podcasts, get a mentor or anything else that will help you consume leadership principles. To help other leaders grow, you have to also grow. You are leading by example. If you have stopped growing, start growing again today. Begin by Googling leadership and finding a good blog. Or pick up one of your old leadership books. Just start, and you'll be amazed.

Implementation and follow-up

The last step is implementation and follow-up. Whatever you are teaching or learning does you no good if you aren't putting some of it into practice. If you read a book, there is generally too much information to try to apply it all. I suggest picking one or two items that you can start that day and truly focus on its application for the next 90 days. Create follow up. Ask your staff how you are doing. Ask mentees their opinion. You need feedback and you need accountability.

Developing a habit of good leadership always pays off. If you have been teaching someone, help them pick which one or two habits they will focus on, and then follow up. Observe and let that person know how he or she is doing. Be honest about your assessment, but also be intentional. Your goal is not to hammer them for not doing it well, but help them get to the point where they *are* doing it well. Your goal is development, not punishment.

Consistently invest

Once you have a leader moving in the right direction, it is time to replicate the process with another leader. Consistently invest in leaders. You are never one and done. This is a consistent repetitive process to produce multiple great leaders. If you are working with your managers or supervisors, you are creating leaders who will or should one day replace you. Your job is

creating leaders who can do what you do, and, truthfully, to do it better.

Insecure leaders find this difficult and typically refuse to do so. Do not let your insecurities get in the way. You may be holding yourself back from other opportunities that you don't even know of because you don't have a replacement. This may hold you back because you've shown that you can't develop other leaders. Don't let insecurities keep you from being a great leader.

When the magic happens

Building a leadership program is one of the most productive measures a leader can take. The return on investment is high, and it greatly increases the leader's effectiveness. It is a daily challenge to invest in other leaders, but also to identify other leaders. Some may stand out while others tend to shy away from the spotlight. Leaders must be diligent to recognize next-line of leaders.

Creating leaders means you are creating owners in what they do. They learn responsibility and accountability. Leaders understand results and the drive to achieve them. When leaders have those types of next-level employees or managers, they are winning. Those are the leaders who get it. They understand that the job changes. The results change. Productivity increases, and accountability is high. That's when the magic happens. Leaders lead. They create. Build your program and build your leaders. ●



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