

# Hewlett-Packard Takes the Waste Out of Leadership

By Mickey Connolly and Susan Burnett

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In January 2002, Hewlett-Packard faced extraordinary challenges. The overall economy had weakened in the wake of September 11 and the "dot com" downfall. The first large-scale layoffs in the company's history were being felt in practical and deeply emotional ways. A major element in the company's reinvention was being played out in public view—the proposed merger of HP and Compaq. These forces combined to create a tumultuous, high-risk business environment. Differing opinions about what to do and how to do it were rampant.

At a time when many companies felt compelled to slash training and development investments and wait for storms to pass, HP began to train thousands of its managers in an innovative program called *Dynamic Leadership*. This bold, global initiative, which was designed and implemented in near record time, introduced important new principles, skills, and tools to help HP leaders accelerate valuable change and develop capabilities aligned with the company's new strategic direction. Now, with more than 9,000 HP managers trained in the program and a 15-to-1 return on HP's investment, the company judges *Dynamic Leadership* to be a success.

## THE IMPERATIVE FOR CHANGE

Hewlett-Packard ended its 2002 fiscal year with more than \$70 billion in revenue and more than 140,000 employees in 160 countries. Headquartered in Palo Alto, California, the company has long been admired for its products, ethics, business innovations, and competitive spirit. But by the end of the 1990s, six decades after Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard launched the company, people inside and outside of HP began to question whether that competitive, innovative, and honorable spirit still existed.

During the 1990s, performance had been erratic, and the opportunities of the Internet had mostly escaped HP. The company was too dependent upon its printing revenues, innovation was lagging, and customers were complaining about poor service and inconvenient processes. Change was necessary to assure a strong future.

HP executives believed that many opportunities to serve customers and stockholders had been lost because of poor coordination between the more than 80 business units. Customers had to assemble their own solutions by talking to many different HP employees in many different businesses. The lack of internal connectivity was not only a problem for customers; it promoted turf protection while stifling innovation and profitable growth. The strategic answer was to become a customer-friendly portfolio of computing and imaging services and solutions.

In 2001, HP's board of directors and executive council committed to a new direction for the company in the twenty-first century. The company was reorganized into four Global Business Units:

- Enterprise Systems Group, which focuses on the key components of Information Technology infrastructure that affect business agility, including storage, servers, and software
- Imaging and Printing Group, the well-known leader in imaging and printing solutions for consumers and businesses, which is now expanding into commercial printing
- HP Services, a global Information Technology services organization that offers an array of solutions that help customers multiply their IT return on investment
- Personal Systems Group, a personal computing solutions provider for home and business whose products include notebook PCs, workstations, handhelds, and other sophisticated personal computing devices

Although each unit was charged with market-leading success in its vertical markets, coordinating action inside the vertical business unit was no longer enough. The new units were also charged with collaborating across business unit boundaries to create new, incremental value for customers and shareowners. It was time to make the coordination of products, services, and solutions an HP problem rather than a customer problem. This major strategic choice triggered an ambitious and massive reinvention of HP, a process led by CEO Carly Fiorina to revitalize the innovative heritage of the company, accelerate strategic change, and catalyze profitable growth.

As the reinvention unfolded, a survey was launched for employees at all levels of the company to assess progress. Fiorina felt strongly that "we need to take a hard look in the mirror." The results showed that the substantial majority of employees understood and agreed with the reinvention imperatives and high-level strategy, but they had several concerns:

- Line managers were not aligned on priorities for action.
- Decision making was slow.
- Cross-boundary cooperation was weak.
- The changes in processes, metrics, rewards, and behavior to support the shift to a customer-centered business strategy needed to be accelerated.
- Accountability for measurable results needed to be increased.

This feedback spotlighted one major implication of the reinvention—the need for a different style of leadership. The leadership habits of the previous decade—which had been well suited to autonomous,

vertical business units with little interaction among them—were insufficient for driving cross-boundary innovation, efficiency, and rapid change. No one expected that the transition to new leadership behaviors would be easy.

Susan Burnett, HP's vice president of Workforce Development and Organization Effectiveness, and her key direct reports also gained insights into the strengths and developmental needs of HP business leaders relative to the demands of the reinvention. They interacted with, observed, and received feedback from many HP leaders through such forums as

- Senior Leadership Meetings, in-person and virtual meetings of the top 250 managers in the company
- The Workforce Development board of directors, whose representatives from every major business, geographical region, and key companywide function served as a conduit for the concerns of middle management and individual employees and provided wise counsel about the design and rollout of training and development investments
- Manager training programs for general managers, functional managers, and high potential up-and-coming managers
- Senior executive 360-degree evaluations designed to reveal strengths and weaknesses in senior leadership relative to the challenges posed by the new strategic direction

Important input also came from other HR vice presidents and Susan Bowick, executive vice president of Human Resources, who provided timely and consistent connection to the CEO's point of view.

## **CONVERSATION: A CATALYST FOR CHANGE**

These interactions with and among HP leaders revealed information about patterns of leadership behavior, especially what worked and what did not. A particularly important pattern had to do with conversational effectiveness. Burnett began to notice that the managers who were most effective in unscripted conversation were the most effective change leaders. When strategy, processes, metrics, and behavior are stable and relatively unchanging, conversational skill is less important than simply following the proven path. When those same things are dynamic, in a state of change, conversational skill becomes crucial. "This is when I got deeply interested in conversations as a catalyst for change and went on my own learning journey," Burnett said. "That journey led to our partnership with Conversant."

Conversant is a Boulder, Colorado, consulting practice focused on how conversations affect the rate and quality of organizational achievement. Mickey Connolly, Richard Rianoshek, and other members of Conversant had worked for more than ten years with the Ink Jet Supplies business in HP. Burnett watched Connolly coach some HP executives and noticed that some of them "really improved their impact after the coaching and became more powerful and effective. It occurred to me that when many of our experienced leaders were not getting the response they wanted, they did not know what to change. We needed to do something about that, because they were all in important interactions every day."

Burnett's research led her to long-time senior manager Greg Merten, the vice president and general manager of Supplies Operations for HP's Ink Jet Supplies business. For years, he had been sponsoring research into the impact of conversation on relationships, creativity, and fast execution of business goals, and Conversant had been a long-time partner in these efforts.

"The way we used to solve problems tended to damage relationships," Merten told Burnett. "Turf protection and blame would leave the people involved weakened as a team and in worse shape to solve whatever problem came next. Now, we solve bigger problems faster, and relationships are in better shape after the problem solving, not worse." He went on to cite large decreases in overhead expenses, accelerated decision making, and increases in employee productivity as measures of success. "I cannot imagine a greater return on investment for the company than focusing on the conversations leaders have," he said. "In the Ink Jet business alone, we saved many millions of dollars by developing ourselves to communicate and relate in a way that accelerates the resolution of any problem we encounter." Burnett saw clearly that the lessons learned in the Ink Jet Supplies business about conversational leadership met the needs she was hearing from managers throughout HP.

Burnett enlisted Merten as the executive sponsor of further investigation into conversation as a catalyst for change. His experience as a senior line manager helped maintain the focus on producing important business results.

Early on, Merten endorsed simple definitions for value and waste that had come from his organization's work with Conversant:

**Value:** What customers and investors are more than willing to pay for and employees are willing and able to provide.

**Waste:** Any activity that requires more resources or time than the value created

Value became the watchword. It informed the design, testing, and improvement of the program that ultimately grew out of Burnett's investigation.

On August 20, 2001, EVP Susan Bowick, Conversant CEO Mickey Connolly, and Susan Burnett successfully presented a case to HP's executive council for accelerating strategic execution through a learning solution—which they called *Dynamic Leadership*—that would train HP managers to (1) increase the value of leadership conversations and (2) decrease the conversational waste that demotivates and decelerates valuable action. Burnett emerged from the meeting gratified but challenged: "We just sold a solution we have yet to create." Connolly reminded her they had proven concepts, which was a strong start. Burnett agreed but pointed out that "we don't yet have a globally applicable design, measures of success, a delivery infrastructure, or an approved budget."

Remarkably, within three months—tumultuous and painful months for the company as well as the country—everything Burnett had cited as missing was in place and pilot programs were underway. Despite a soured economy, the first HP layoffs in history, and the proposed high-profile merger with Compaq, the company forged ahead with its commitment to implement this critical tool for reinvention.

### ***DYNAMIC LEADERSHIP: CONCEPTS AND CONTENT***

The purpose of *Dynamic Leadership* is to substantially improve the ability of HP managers to accelerate “time-to-value” for HP customers, shareowners, and employees. Time-to-value means the rate at which employees willingly create what customers and shareowners are happy to pay for. The method of acceleration is conversational leadership, which is based on a well-tested assumption that the rate at which managers learn from and resolve differences is the primary determinant of time-to-value. The tools and principles apply to any exchange between people (one-on-one or group) in any venue (face-to-face, voicemail, e-mail, web conferences, conference calls, memos) and are particularly important in a dynamic business environment.

The program focuses on two essential areas:

- *Accelerating alignment and high performance collaboration* by teaching participants to work from a shared definition of business value and to use a conversation technology to learn from differences, gain alignment to purpose, and rapidly raise and resolve issues
- *Executing with accountability* by teaching participants to clarify accountability, use a rapid decision process to make valuable decisions, and learn and adjust rapidly

We (the authors and the other members of the core development team) developed an initial design based on the conversational leadership concepts that had been successful in the Ink Jet Supplies business. The concepts were condensed into a two-day workshop and rolled out for rapid testing with groups of HP general managers, functional managers, and HR leaders. In the workshops, managers learned about the concepts and tools and were coached to use them in order to raise and resolve difficult issues quickly. After some of these sessions, we conducted coaching calls with 15 managers to support their continued use of the tools and get feedback on their business value. Feedback was very positive, but participants voiced a chronic concern, typified by the following quote from a general manager: “This has been great for me. My staff is more hopeful and creative, decisions are smarter and quicker, and there are a lot of things getting done more quickly, *but* you’ve given me a lot of support. We cannot just put managers in a short class and think the same things will happen for them.”

This concern clearly pointed to a barrier to value: A two-day event would not produce the desired results. We revisited the content and structure of the program, which led Burnett and her staff to another external partner, Fort Hill Company of Montchanin, Delaware, which offers a rigorous on-line follow-through management tool, *Friday5s*<sup>®</sup>. We incorporated the tool as a core component of the program, which greatly enhanced its overall value through the added focus of systematic follow-up, coaching, measurement, and improvement (more about this aspect later in this article).

As mentioned earlier, the concept of value is central to the *Dynamic Leadership* program. The development team had committed to employing that principle in its own activities and found that despite many conflicting opinions about what to do and not do, most could be quickly resolved by testing suggestions against the definition of value. People argued *for* value rather than *against* someone else's proposal. This mutual concern for value was a strong source of connection and coordination, and *Dynamic Leadership* became a much more potent offering as a result, a twelve-week development experience with prework, follow-up, and coaching that produced real and measurable value for customers, shareowners, and employees.

The architecture of the program now included four basic elements:

- Prework that helps participants prepare for maximum value
- A two-day workshop, co-led by a content expert and an HP line manager, in which participants learn and practice the concepts and tools
- A ten-week electronic follow-up that features goal tracking, coaching, and accountability for producing valuable results
- A three-month follow-up to support sustained change and assess return on investment

Our bias was to use proven solutions that clearly supported the purpose of the program. We started with the Conversant conversation technology, since it had years of application history in HP in the printing supplies business. (Readers interested in the core principles can refer to *The Communication Catalyst*, by Connolly and partner Richard Rianoshek, published by Dearborn Press in the fall of 2002.) Any suggestions for program design were carefully assessed for their fit with these basic concepts.

Practices and materials that made it into the design of the two-day workshop include the following:

- An opening exercise in which managers (1) depict the current state of decision making and execution (through skits, drawings, lists of observations, etc.) and then (2) use the themes from the depictions to forge a real-time contract within the group for the results of the two days
- An interactive learning journal
- A variety of experiential exercises so that managers successfully confront the emotional challenge of valuable conversation
- A decision-making tool that helps managers design roles and responsibilities in a context of fast value rather than turf protection
- The “Evening Of Value” exercise:
  - Day One: Late in the afternoon, participants break into groups and plan a valuable evening together, using the definition of value as a guide. The groups then present their plans to each other and align on what to do for the evening. Course leaders observe and take notes about the quality of application of Day One concepts and tools.
  - Day Two: In the morning, the “Evening Of Value” exercise is thoroughly debriefed and the course leaders provide coaching. Managers report a dramatic shift “from just understanding the concepts to really using them well.”

- A desk-top tool kit for the managers to take away, with all the essential definitions and tools from the workshop
- A copy of *The Communication Catalyst*, distributed to all participants at the end of the two-day workshop
- Evaluations, goal sheets, and explanation of the *Friday5s* follow-up system

## THE KEYS TO RAPID DEVELOPMENT

In *Dynamic Leadership*, we highlight “rapid rate of adjustment” as an important source of profitable growth for HP. True to the concept, we had a rough design for the program in 30 days, launched pilots in 60 days, scaled globally in 90 days, and froze the design in 120 days (subject to periodic reviews)—a blinding pace by the standards of most projects of this scope. We used several mechanisms and processes to accelerate the time frame for design and implementation.

***Plan, act, test, and then perfect.*** We firmly believed we would develop a better program faster if we acted first and perfected later, rather than holding up implementation until we thought we had a perfect product.

***Move down parallel paths.*** We worked concurrently rather than successively on key steps in the process:

- *Pilots.* We conducted two-day sessions using rough initial designs, and then adjusted the design based on the results.
- *Training and Certification of Leads and Co-Leads.* There were content experts from Conversant and internal HP line managers experienced with the concepts, but not enough of either for a global rollout. We began training workshop leader candidates in the basic principles right away, even before workshop training manuals were completed.
- *Implementation Plans.* Since the reinvention survey showed that needs existed across all business units, functions, and geographies, we had to deliver in 160 countries. Workforce Development planners rapidly designed region and business implementation plans and a scheduling process for the program’s two enrollment options, intact teams and open enrollment.

***Establish clear roles and a decision-making process.*** In each of the above parallel paths, clear accountability was established so we could move swiftly. We obtained much input in the early stages to guarantee thorough alignment of important interests, but at the point when rapid action was required, we limited participation to those people who had clear direct roles in completing and launching *Dynamic Leadership*. For the design of the workshop, for example, about 20 people participated at the input stage, but the team was trimmed to four in order to produce a rough workshop design in only two days.

**Stay connected.** Several methods were used to keep critical resources connected to each other and the development team:

- Burnett and HP's Sarah Engel, who had overall accountability for the program in its first year, closely communicated with HP learning consultants throughout the global organization, who served as effective "listening posts" and provided real-time insight into opportunities and problems.
- Burnett hosted a weekly call with the major players to share progress and to raise and resolve important issues using the principles of *Dynamic Leadership*.
- As the program scaled up and more people were trained as leaders and co-leaders, an e-room for virtual collaboration was established to connect more than 200 HP and external teachers in a community of practice. Interactive virtual coaching sessions were held to determine what was working and why and to help leaders who were not getting the expected results.

**Freeze the essential and improve the rest.** HP was very clear about which parts of *Dynamic Leadership* it considered essential and proven and which parts were open to change. This clarity was very important as we began to train course leaders, since many wanted to add in their favorite practices rather than learn new ones.

## **IMPLEMENTATION: A PARTNERSHIP**

The implementation of *Dynamic Leadership* has been co-led by experts in the material and HP line managers. This partnership between content experts and HP managers takes several forms.

**Rollout.** The senior managers on the Workforce Development board of directors strongly advised that programs be offered for both intact teams—teams already in place and functioning—and open enrollment groups. Intact teams would receive the multiple benefits of new skills, teambuilding, and real-time problem solving. Since HP was in a travel freeze at the time of launch, the open enrollment option gave people who might otherwise be traveling a chance to participate. The content experts advised that group size be limited to 30 in a session to guarantee sufficient participation and practice.

**Certification.** To be certified to lead a *Dynamic Leadership* workshop, a candidate must be approved by both an HP executive (to guarantee credibility with other managers) and a Conversant partner (to guarantee content integrity).

**Delivery.** Content experts alongside experienced, successful HP managers lead the two-day workshops. Vice presidents, general managers, and functional managers added enormous credibility to *Dynamic Leadership* when it was introduced—and continue to do so today. The content expert presents the concepts, conducts the exercises, and coaches. The manager conveys the importance of *Dynamic Leadership*, shows its application to HP business situations, and coaches participants on the use of the

material in HP. Because line managers are not always available, successful, credible HP Human Resources and learning professionals augment the co-leader group.

**Executive Sessions.** To cultivate support, we offered two-hour executive briefings for the staffs of vice presidents and above. This low barrier to entry allowed us to introduce the value proposition to important influencers rapidly. Most of these executives and their staffs went on to participate in the entire program.

## **AN INNOVATIVE FOLLOW-THROUGH SUPPORT SYSTEM**

HP implemented a rigorous postcourse management system using the commercial follow-through management tool *Friday5s*<sup>®</sup> from Fort Hill Company. The system

- Assures that the principles of *Dynamic Leadership* are being applied in real time
- Provides follow-on coaching and reinforcement for participants
- Includes evaluation tools to support program improvement and measure the program's impact, including return on investment

**Application and Coaching.** At the close of the second day of the workshop, participants are asked to commit to two valuable goals that require them to apply what they have learned. These are entered into a workshop-specific *Friday5s* web site. A copy of each participant's objectives is e-mailed to his/her manager so that managers know what their direct reports have learned and intend to work on. The following week, participants are reminded of their goals by e-mail. The system makes each participant's goals visible to all the other members of his/her workshop to encourage shared accountability and learning.

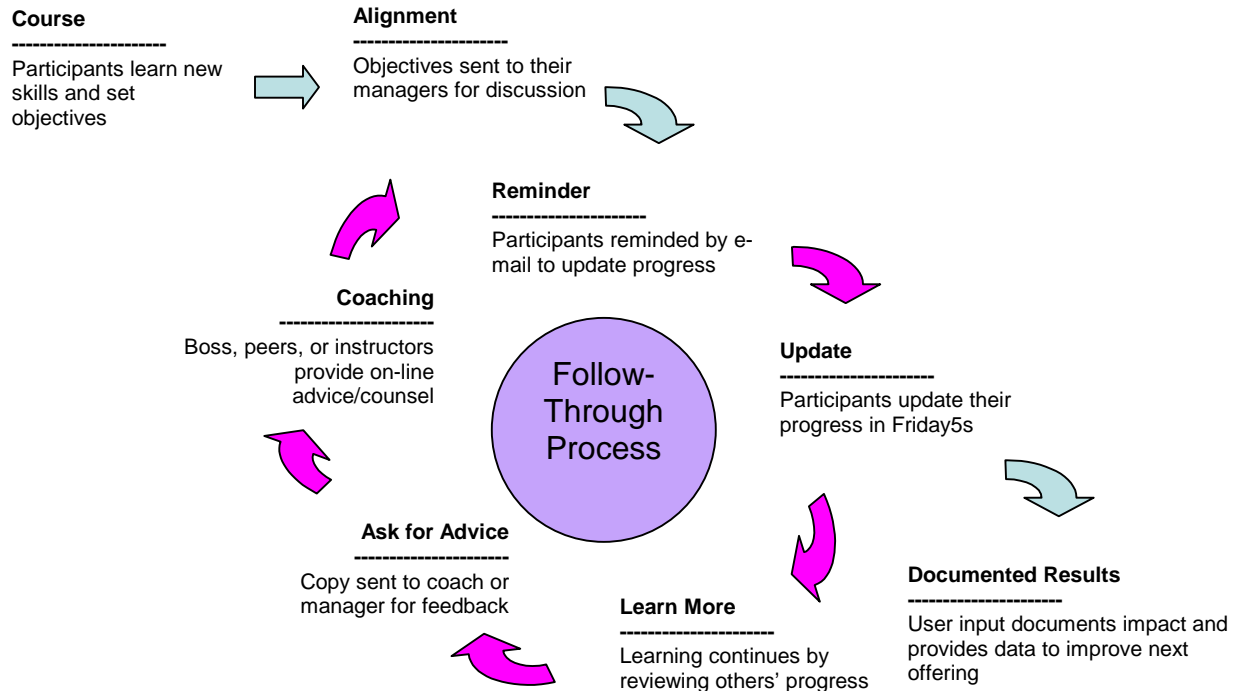
The follow-through process is illustrated in **Exhibit 1**. On five occasions following the course (Weeks 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9), participants are sent a link to the group's web site and asked to update their progress by answering the following questions:

- What have you done to make progress on this goal?
- How much progress did you make?
- What are you going to do next?
- What has been your most important lesson learned?

The purpose is to encourage participants to apply what they have learned, reflect on the experience, and share insights with one another. Participants have the option of sharing each update with a manager and/or coach for feedback and counsel. On the final update, participants are asked to describe the business impact of working on the goal and, as they reflect on the two months since the program, describe what has proven most valuable from *Dynamic Leadership*.

Program learning is also reinforced through an on-line feature, called GuideMe™. This feature provides practical suggestions for action based on the course materials.

### Exhibit 1. Dynamic Leadership's Follow-Through Process



Reuse is a good test for the value of follow-through tools. The vast majority of participants (83 percent) who complete the first update complete two or more updates during the follow-through period, indicating a substantial experience of value. Additionally, if the participant receives feedback regarding an update from a boss, course leader, or fellow participant, she/he submits twice as many updates as those who receive no feedback.

**Measurement and Improvement.** Three types of evaluation are used to continuously improve the program, measure its impact, and calculate the return on investment:

- Immediate postworkshop evaluations
- Analysis of follow-through reports
- Three-month postprogram financial impact analysis

*Immediate Postworkshop Evaluations.* At the conclusion of the two-day workshop, participants complete a 17-point evaluation of both the content and workshop leaders. The minimum performance standard for leaders to continue leading workshops is an average score of 4.0 on a 5-point scale. The *Dynamic Leadership* program staff reviews the evaluations; leaders with ratings less than 4.0 are coached, while leaders with average ratings of 4.5 or above are interviewed for best practices, which are shared widely.

Leader support processes and course materials are periodically revised based on these evaluations. As a result of these continuous improvement efforts, the workshop evaluation scores have been strongly positive. **Exhibit 2** shows the percentage of agreement with four important statements from the workshop evaluation.

**Exhibit 2. Participant Evaluations of the Dynamic Leadership Program**

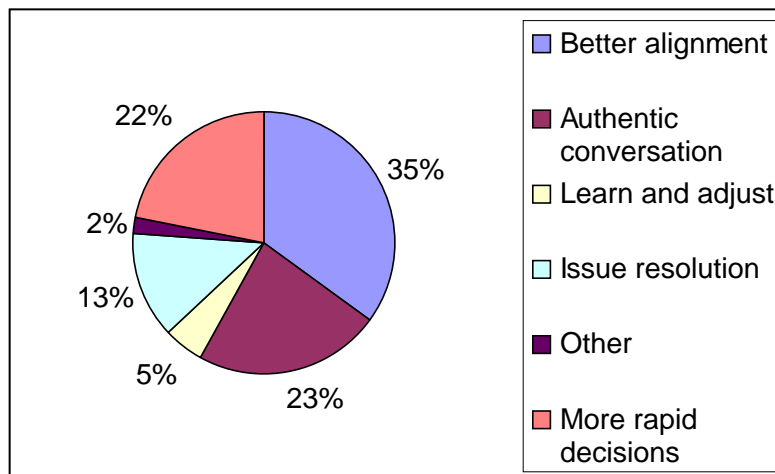
Response	% Who Agree
Worth time away from the office	91 %
Increases my effectiveness on the job	94 %
I would recommend to my peers	89 %
Will help me help produce rapid time-to-value	89 %

N = 8,273 managers from the Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe, Middle East, and Africa

*Analysis of Follow-Through Reports.* Learning expert D.L. Kirkpatrick proposes that in addition to measuring participant reaction to a training program, rigorous evaluation should include documenting behavioral change (Level 3) and measuring business results (Level 4). *Dynamic Leadership's* evaluation process includes both Level 3 and Level 4 analyses.

Because all of the participants' goals are entered into a database, Ft. Hill is able to evaluate the distribution of planned postcourse objectives (see **Exhibit 3**). As intended, more than three fourths of all goals focus on improved alignment, more effective conversation, and accelerated decision making, all leadership objectives key to the HP reinvention.

**Exhibit 3. Objectives Achieved by Participants in HP's Dynamic Leadership**



N = 13,720 follow-through objectives

Postprogram goals demonstrate that the participants plan to apply the intended lessons in ways that will have practical benefit for HP. More importantly, participants' biweekly *Friday5s* reports indicate that they translate their learning experience into actions that benefit their teams and the company as a whole, as these quotes from the reports illustrate:

- "Less disputes and lower customer dissatisfaction when it comes to project responsibility, as everyone in the project team is aware of his/her role and actions required from that role." (Asia Pacific)
- "Meetings are direct and more concise, reducing meeting time and decision-making processes by about 20 percent. Making a conscious effort to be more open and direct in conversations with peers, staff, and my manager." (Americas)
- "Met with whole multifunction team, defined shared goals. Worked with people in pretense and came out with qualified strategy using decision model and with full team commitment." (Americas)
- "After identifying the key players at the beginning, I have contacted them and discussed their view and their objectives regarding this project. Especially in one area of the project, we have been successful and implemented a more flexible solution for all involved parties in order to move forward fast enough. This was only achieved because we aligned our purposes and found the intersection!" (Europe)

In Week 9 following the workshop, participants are asked what they have found most useful from the program. More than half of all comments mention the conversation tools and the closely related concepts of shared and intersecting purpose.

*Three-Month Postprogram Financial Impact Analysis.* To quantify the impact of the program, HP worked with Fort Hill to design an analysis to occur after each participant had sufficient on-the-job experience with *Dynamic Leadership* tools. Three months after attending the workshop, participants are asked to indicate how frequently (if at all) they have used the *Dynamic Leadership* tools. They are also asked to describe, if possible, a single specific example in which this created value for HP and to provide details of quantifiable benefits, such as hours saved, new revenue generated, or costs avoided. In evaluating the program's impact, only specific examples for which there is good documentation are included. Participants have provided examples like the following one:

In one specific project that I'm driving, I've applied the ... "Participative Decision" process; the result is really convincing since we've been able to keep to the very short deadline. In the old way, the whole process would have taken three months. Today, we have a standard roadmap model, and data are available for about 80 percent of the portfolio; we made the overall process in only 1.5 months. Estimated \$US value: \$91,200, assuming that four people are involved.

The value generated by the *Dynamic Leadership* program is calculated by multiplying the median value of reported events by the number of reported uses of program material, then discounting (by 75 percent) for positive reporting bias. The median rather than the average reported value is used to avoid undue influence of a small number of very high-value instances. The return on investment (ROI) is calculated by comparing the value generated to the full cost of delivering the program, which includes the per-hour cost of the attendees' time.

The results have overwhelmingly supported the value of HP's investment. Key findings reported to the HP board of directors included the following:

- *The training is practical and useful on the job.* Ninety-four percent (94%) of participants reported that they had used the *Dynamic Leadership* tools to advantage in the first three months after training. The average participant used the tools 9.5 times during the follow-through period.
- *The program produces a significant return on investment.* The median value per single reported application was \$3,800, which is 50 percent more than the fully loaded cost per participant. On an annual basis, the ROI is \$15 per dollar of cost. Since no attempt was made to ascribe value to important but difficult-to-quantify benefits like improved quality or customer satisfaction, the actual program value and ROI are likely to be even greater.
- *Most of the benefits have been attributable to time saved in reaching decisions and gaining alignment.* Participants frequently mentioned intangible benefits as well, including improved customer service, higher quality, and better morale.

Perhaps most remarkably, these results were achieved in the midst of one of the largest reorganizations in corporate history, the HP-Compaq merger.

## KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

Many factors have contributed to the success of *Dynamic Leadership* in helping HP's leaders increase their "time-to-value." Several bear special mention because they demonstrate the value of applying *Dynamic Leadership's* principles to the development and rollout of the program itself.

***Strong Connection with Business Leaders and Business Imperatives.*** Early on, the team established a real connection with HP business leadership, which provided a clear sense of business imperatives and the gap in business performance. The result was a natural, unforced partnership that ensured sponsorship, business relevance, and high-leverage solutions.

***Commitment to Business Value.*** Because of the serious commitment to business value, it was imperative that we provide a learning experience that would produce measurable improvement in HP leaders' ability to conduct high value conversations with customers, shareowners, and employees.

**Staying True to Purpose, Concepts, and Tools.** Team members went through the core concepts of *Dynamic Leadership* together and made a commitment to manage the project from the concepts. This made it possible to distinguish clearly what was essential. It ensured a coherent design, had project team members “walk the talk,” and allowed for personnel change with no loss of team effectiveness. The team employed the very tools it was training HP managers to use, which in turn enabled it to both rapidly innovate and reliably produce value for more than 9,000 HP leaders.

**Fast Action and Adjustment.** We moved into action much faster than traditional learning design models prescribe. It is only through the action and cocreation with stakeholders that “learning and adjusting” in a fast prototyping mode is possible. Once patterns of success emerged, we locked down design, costs, accountabilities, and a repeatable process, enabling us to execute and roll out the program more rapidly.

**Implementation Partnership between Content Experts and Line Managers.** Leaders leading leaders proved to be a powerful model for changing behavior and improving performance at HP. Success is nearly guaranteed when an array of successful managers cares enough for the material to help deliver it and the experts use their content and facilitation expertise to support the managers in delivering an effective developmental experience.

**Reinforcement and Measurement.** The postworkshop support system created a reinforcing cycle of follow-up action, coaching, feedback, and measurement to assure that participants were learning and manifesting the desired new behaviors, and that the new behaviors were producing the desired business value.

## THE LEARNING CONTINUES

The *Dynamic Leadership* experience has been very positive for Hewlett-Packard, though not without its challenges. A small portion of participants, 11 percent, would not recommend the program to their peers, and some of those individuals have been very vocal about that. We have found that great ROI numbers are not enough; we also need to share widely the inspiring stories and positive quotes that make the experiences more concrete. We discovered that a small minority of managers considered conversational skill to be “soft” and unimportant rather than a crucial advantage.

The positive and negative reactions alike make us smarter about positioning and delivery, and so the program evolves. What we learn from these deeply committed managers continues to inform our understanding of the demands on HP leaders in the twenty-first century and what will bring value to our business, our customers, and our employees.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Connolly, M., & Rianoshek, R. (2002). *The communication catalyst*. Chicago: Dearborn Press.

Kirkpatrick, D.L. (1998). Evaluation of training programs, 2nd. ed. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.