

Leadership as Craft - Crafting New Leaders



Philip Mirvis

Global Network on Corporate
Citizenship and Social Innovation
Lab, Babson College

Karen Ayas

The Ripples Business Academy

Jason Grenfell-Gardner

Teligent

Leadership: Science, Art, or Craft? What is the best way to develop leaders? These questions are vital to the way leaders see themselves, enact their roles, and run their organizations. They present a range of choices to a CEO who needs to develop young leaders in order to grow a business. Philip Mirvis, Karen Ayas, and CEO Jason Grenfell-Gardner address this question by describing a novel approach to developing effective leaders.

The notion of craftsmanship came up during our efforts to rebrand the company. After conducting in-depth interviews with all staff about what our company stands for, we identified the three core pillars of our brand: quality, impactful science, and craftsmanship.

My initial reaction to ‘craftsmanship’ was, no way! We’re not making Swiss watches! We’re making creams and ointments. But then I took a fresh look at the work people were doing in all corners of the company – looking at how the compounders make a bulk drug in the manufacturing site, for instance. I could see that the best compounders had this feeling in their fingertips; they knew exactly when to change from heating to cooling. The same was true of the chemist who looked at a chromatogram and immediately understood that something was off. I realized that our business ran on mastery of these crafts which I had overlooked until I was pointed in the right direction. Then I understood that we had to take that magic spark and help it grow.

We needed to make sure everyone in the company could celebrate being an expert in their craft and understand how those crafts interacted and contributed to the whole. We needed to train leaders who focused on perfecting their craft of leadership, developing themselves and those around them.

- from a conversation with the CEO

This realization inspired Teligent to develop a craftsmanship program to address the shortage of leaders to guide the company through the highly competitive generics market. Managing Teligent’s fast growth called upon its executives to develop basic processes and systems and prepare young graduates, with technical skill but no industry experience or formal business training, to lead. This uniquely designed leadership development program, based on the notion of “leading as craft,” had a profound impact on participants and on the culture of the company.

In learning leadership as a craft, real world practice is essential. Project-based learning allows people to develop and refine practical leadership skills in real-life situations.

Leadership Education

In developing new leaders, companies perpetually face a twofold challenge: to make the right choices about investments and programs and to ensure that both the participants and the organization benefit, in tangible results as well as esprit de corps. These decisions are informed by many considerations: what type of program, how long, and for whom? Use a university curriculum or design your own? How much theory versus practice? Should the training focus on “hard” or “soft” skills?

MBA and other university-based education programs stress the science of leadership. This focus is apparent in leadership texts that emphasize empirically-validated theories and in calls for evidence based practice that relies upon proven methods to yield predictable results. Classes typically focus on facts and analytics, as opposed to exploration and judgment, while case studies present a technical-functional rather than an integrative management perspective.

So what about the art of leadership? Some argue that creative and artful action is born of innate talent, while others contend that it can be learned. K. Anders Ericsson makes a case for “deliberate practice” which he defines as “focused, goal directed and where you can receive constant feedback.”¹ Artful techniques of leading include envisioning, active listening, storytelling, and group problem solving which students can practice in role-plays or simulations, while educators critique their performance.

In learning leadership as a craft, real world practice is essential. Project-based learning allows people to develop and refine practical leadership skills in real-life situations. Students can also learn design thinking and then build out their ideas in innovation labs and incubators—on their campuses or in business.

Designing a Craftsmanship Program

Craftsmanship: “A quality that is honed, refined, and practiced over the course of a career. Requires

a great deal of time, discipline, patience and effort.”² History reveals the defining methods for training craftspeople. The weavers, dyers, glassmakers, ironworkers, goldsmiths, and bakers of medieval times learned their crafts through apprenticeship. Their master would instruct them and also serve as a mentor and role model. Apprentices worked under the direct supervision of a master until they were ready to become journeymen, working more independently and developing their skills through practice and the guidance of others. Finally, at the master-craft stage, they learned how to manage and lead a craft practice. Even mastery was not a solo undertaking: masters joined guilds and collectively regulated the quality of work and the training of future craftspeople.

How, then, can the methods of craftsmanship be applied to educating future business leaders? To develop our program, we combined the best elements from science

and art approaches to leadership and leadership education, including academic theory, case studies, experiential exercises, and studio practice. We then added elements of craft education like hands-on experience, guidance from mentors and role models, and a graduated performance progression, from apprentice to master.

Richard Sennett, author of *The Craftsmen*, also cites the importance of non-verbal knowledge and considers “struggling with the problem” to be essential to craft work.³ Naturally, we had to attend not only to the content, settings, and logistics of our program, but also to its sequence, pace, and energy flow throughout.

Consider how all these factors contribute to the design of a leadership development program that benefits both the participants and the business.

Program Logic and Content

Every business leader and professor has his or her own perspective about

what leadership is, how it should be taught and developed, and what pedagogical methods work best in given situations (setting, company, participants, etc.). That’s why we designed our program to be personalized and customized. With an eye to developing not only individual but also collective leadership capabilities, we approach leadership education on three levels: 1) leading oneself 2) leading others and 3) leading the business.⁴ Our goal is to create what Joe Raelin describes as a “leaderful” company culture.

Our program follows the three traditional phases of craft education—apprentice, journeyman, and craftsman—with each level building upon what came before. Sessions combine conceptual, experiential, and practical learning. Apprentices are introduced to self-awareness, different leadership styles, conflict and communication, leading a team, and so forth. As participants progress to journeymen and then craftsmen, they learn to lead with presence and make decisions in uncertain

Leadership: Science, Art, or Craft? Scholars have made a case for leadership as a science, an art, and a craft:

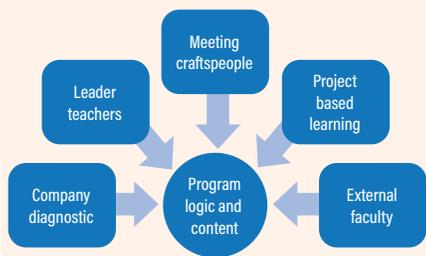
Leadership as Science: Analysis, Prediction, Control. This was scholars first take on business leadership, based in Frederick Taylor’s studies of “scientific management” and Henry Fayol’s administrative principles, reaching its apotheosis in Herbert Simon’s “Administrative Man” who excludes value judgments and concentrates on “facts.” Exemplars include Robert McNamara at Ford in the 1950s who applied systems analysis tools to analyze and forecast trends and Jack Welch in the 1980s who used financial acumen to meet GE’s quarterly earnings targets, buy-and-sell companies, and train thousands of six-sigma “black belts.” Paul Brooker and Margaret Hayward make the case that “rational” leadership has been at the core of iconic companies like Intel, Toyota, Walmart and now Facebook and Amazon.⁵

Leadership as Art: Intuition, Vision, Creativity. In 1957, Philip Selznick challenged the primacy of technical-rational leadership by arguing that under conditions of uncertainty and change, creative leadership was needed to renew an enterprise. This view aligned with James McGregor Burn’s writings on transformational leaders who “address their creative insights to potential followers, seize their attention, spark their interaction,” and with Warren Bennis on vision: “The manager has his eye on the bottom line; the leader has his eye on the horizon.” Exemplars are Steve Jobs and Warren Buffett—“I am not a business man, I am an artist.” Nancy Adler applies an aesthetic lens to “leading beautifully.”⁷

Leadership as Craft: Experience, Practice, Pragmatism. Chester Barnard and Mary Parker Follett stressed that authority is not a function of position, but is negotiated between leaders and followers in their everyday interactions. Connecting this to craft, Steven Taylor writes: “Leadership is the craft of working with other humans to get things done. In the same way that a carpenter learns to use tools and techniques to work wood into something beautiful and functional, a leader can learn to use tools and techniques to work their connections with others to develop beautiful and functional relationships.” Biographies of Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Edison and Anita Roddick depict leaders who learn by doing, hone their skills through practice and experience (successful and not), and are resourceful and resilient.

Effective leadership embodies all three types. While leaders who are hyper-rationalists can be typecast as technocrats, the type’s paragons (e.g., Barack Obama) also attend to the human side of leading. The leader as artist may often be a maverick (e.g., Elon Musk), but innovative firms like 3M, Tata, and Netflix make heavy use of metrics and operate in a technical-rational mode. And while craftsmen are pragmatic doers, Mintzberg finds that successful executives blend logic and imagination with their practical experience.⁸

Exhibit 1: Leading as Craft - Program Design Logic



situations. Business inputs include deeper dives into the industry, strategy, and core functions like product development, manufacturing, quality, and the like. Real-life case studies, presented by company leaders, become more complex, call for more nuanced thinking and judgment, and drive participants to wrestle with strategic, operational, and ethical dilemmas.

- 1. Company diagnostic:** We begin to design a program by interviewing top executives and using surveys, focus groups, or interviews to gather input from employees at every level and function. This diagnostic allows us to understand the current state and future direction of the organization, including market, strategy, operations, workforce, and culture, as well as the associated performance gaps. We can also identify the knowledge and abilities needed to fill those gaps; gauge the interest, ability, and drive of the top team to groom the next generation of leaders; and assess the readiness and motivation of the staff.
- 2. Leader-Teachers:** One of the distinctive features of a craft program is that executives serve as the master craftspeople of their trade and assume multiple roles:
 - **Teachers:** Core to the program is that executives teach industry and business knowledge *themselves* to ensure that the content is

relevant, practical, and company-specific. This means that execs must not only be experts on their subject, but also be able to communicate effectively. External faculty provide each exec with guidance and support to ensure that the material they present is digestible and includes interactive learning components.

- **Mentors:** Members of the top team act as mentors throughout the program. All participants are assigned an executive mentor (from outside their area of responsibility) who meets with them prior to and throughout the program. Mentors offer an understanding ear and sound guidance while helping participants to design a business project and devise their own leadership development plan. Most of these interactions are structured and managed by the mentee.
- **Project Champions/Team Coaches:** In the journeyman and craftsman phases, participants tackle a cross-functional and then an enterprise-wide business project. Whichever top team member “owns” the problem at hand serves as project champion. Champions help their team to refine their mission statement, develop a project management plan, and deliver results. They also coach their team throughout the project on its technical aspects, and on dealing with interpersonal and team issues, political dynamics, resistance to proposed changes, and more.
- **Role Models:** Finally, executives are tasked with being role-models for future leaders. They share their own

leadership experiences and self-assessments, talking candidly about their successes and failures in business and beyond.

The hope is that participants will not only use what they learn in their own leadership, but also gain a deeper appreciation of what it takes to master a craft by witnessing the passion and dedication of craftspeople at work.

- 3. Meeting Craftspeople:** Teachers come in many forms. In our quest to expand business leadership students’ understanding of leading self, others, and an enterprise, Ayas and Mirvis have introduced them to community, civic, and spiritual leaders, masters of martial arts, yoga, and zen, and artists and inventors of all kinds. Each time we conduct this kind of program, we make sure participants interact with exemplary crafters outside the company, learning how they developed their craft and even taking the first steps toward learning it. The hope is that participants will not only use what they learn in their own leadership, but will also gain a deeper appreciation of what it takes to master a craft, witnessing the passion and dedication of craftspeople at work.⁵
- 4. Project Based Learning:** Project-based learning is integral to developing leadership as a craft. Our participants are confronted with a problem to which there is no predetermined solution. They must conduct research, communicate with those who have a stake in the project,

design and experiment with possible solutions, deal with unexpected events and errors, manage their time and relationships, and reach a solution, all on their own. Apprentices undertake a business improvement project within their area of responsibility. Journeymen face a cross-functional challenge, working in small teams. Craftsmen are given an assignment for the whole group that comprises nearly every element of the business. The selection and scope of these projects is critical to the success of the program. Participants, executives and faculty cooperate in front-end project development and in periodic progress reviews. All participants receive training in project management, engaging with stakeholders, and relevant diagnostic and planning tools.

Unlike a university program, where faculty run the show, in this case the CEO supervised the overall program, hosted each session, and worked with the external faculty and his own leadership team to design and deliver content relevant to his company.

5. **External Faculty:** External faculty play an important role, pulling together all the pieces mentioned above to ensure the integrity of the program’s overall logic and content as well as its effective delivery. While the leader-teacher model is gaining popularity in development programs, few executives are schooled in designing and

delivering leadership programs and most have neither the time nor the inclination to learn. Exhibit 2 highlights how external faculty, with their knowledge of craft leadership development, contribute to the program.

We now turn to the case of Teligent, and the moment when its CEO, Grenfell-Gardner invited Ayas and Mirvis, as external faculty, to design a craftsmanship program for his company. Unlike a university program, where faculty run the show, in this case the CEO supervised the overall program, hosted each session, and worked with the external faculty and his own leadership team to design and deliver content relevant to his company. Together, the three of us drew on the aforementioned tools and techniques to design and run the program. Along the way, we discovered a few errors and redesigned a few components.

Craftsmanship at Teligent

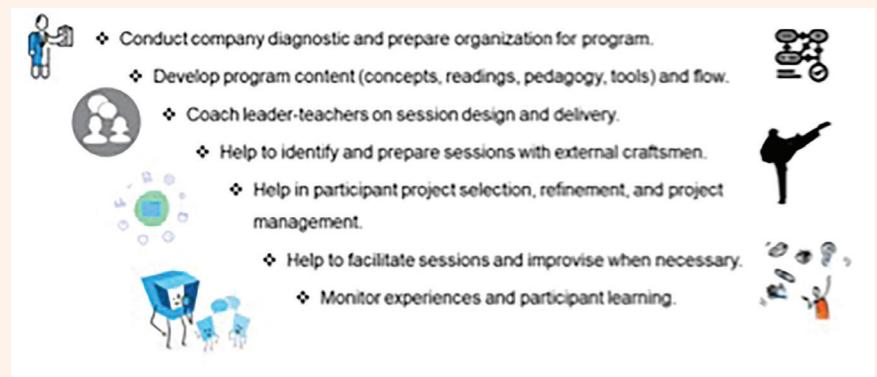
Teligent is a generic pharmaceutical maker based in New Jersey with operations in Canada and Estonia. It has an annual revenue of \$70 million and employs about 200 people. Driven by science, the company produces an ever-increasing range of topical, injectable, complex, and ophthalmic products. Teligent is growing rapidly, with dozens of new products filed with the FDA, the

addition of clean room manufacturing capability in the U.S., new facilities in Estonia, and aspirations to do more.

When Grenfell-Gardner became CEO in 2012, Teligent employed twenty-eight people. Within four years the company grew significantly in revenue, employees, and complexity. Our company diagnostic revealed that, as is not unusual in small companies moving into rapid growth, there were mishaps, firefighting (that is, getting bogged down in immediate crises at the expense of moving forward), and a sense of too few hours in the day to achieve ambitious goals. This pressure, coupled with a lack of clarity about individual roles and responsibilities, produced uncertainty about who was responsible, start to finish, for getting products out the door. It also fed a silo mentality between different functions.

Nonetheless, the company had introduced the mantra “work hard and be nice to people” early on, which kept its culture fairly positive. Interviewees described quality, pride, and teamwork as operational norms. “Crazy, hectic, but positive,” was how one employee described it. And indeed, despite its internal chaos and small size, Teligent was in the top ten in number of new drug applications (NDAs) filed in 2016, next to generic giants such as Teva

Exhibit 2: External Faculty Contributions



CEO Grenfell-Gardner gravitated to the craftsmanship program as a way to groom his next generation leaders and create an informal network of leaders binding the company together.

and Sandoz. Our goal was to work out how this success could be multiplied.

The company was at a point at which it required more structure, processes, and systems as well as more business-minded leadership at every level if it was to successfully scale up. Lead employees and supervisors were generally functional experts with no general management training or experience. They lacked knowledge of the industry and, on the U.S. side, were often immigrants or first generation Americans who were still absorbing American work mores and business culture. Many had strong backgrounds in science, but no schooling in interpersonal relations, teamwork, or leadership skills.

Grenfell-Gardner gravitated to the craftsmanship program as a way to groom his next generation leaders and create an informal network of leaders binding the company together. He recognized that, in the short term, the program would add “one more thing” to the overloaded agendas of participants and create further stress in the organization by taking them away from their usual functions. Nonetheless, he was convinced that in the long term this program would help participants to perfect their craft as leaders and engender a tightly knit group who, together, could cope with the challenges

of growth and sustain a positive culture as they scaled up.

From Design to Delivery: The Teligent craftsmanship program was built on the designing components enumerated earlier. Each phase—apprentice, journeyman, master craftsman—lasts six months. In moving from design to implementation, the designers carefully considered several key issues.

Top Team Participation and Preparation: The program calls for the top team to act as leader-teachers, master crafters, role models, and project champions. The execs at Teligent were overloaded, stressed, and wary of taking on new responsibilities. To encourage them to buy in, we hosted a deep and open discussion about the diagnosis to demonstrate gaps in current performance and highlight the need for leadership training. This conversation persuaded the top team to reset its priorities and focus on the project. Next, they participated in team building keyed toward craft leadership, program goals and content, and on understanding the roles they would play.

When it comes to teaching, executives are not all equally adept at conveying knowledge of their craft,

nor at monitoring time, managing a room, and keeping tired participants awake. The leader-teachers needed help with designing sessions, case materials, and exercises and with managing the flow of the classroom. In nearly every session, they presented a specific, real-time business issue for which participants, in small, varied groups, analyzed and debated possible solutions. The session leader and CEO offered feedback on their thinking and conclusions. At one session, the Chief Science Officer introduced participants to the analytic tools used to determine which drugs to develop, had them scour the industry drug registry, and make and justify their recommendations. Some of the new drugs they selected eventually went to new product development. In another session they were asked to debate the company’s sales structure.

Participant Selection: The original plan was to select apprentices from a pool recommended by members of the top team. Because this method engendered suspicions of favoritism, we decided to open up the selection process and offer all employees the opportunity to make a case for their own



admission. These applications revealed some hidden talent, to the benefit of the company. Once the apprentices graduated, they were candidates to become journeymen. Not all continued on: some preferred not to go on while others were deemed unready to move forward. Most of those who did not become journeymen were offered other development opportunities. This same process was used when participants approached the master craftsman level.

Project Selection: At the outset of the program, apprentices were asked to propose projects in their own areas of responsibility which would: 1) be important to the business; 2) expand their leadership skills; 3) help people in their area to develop; 4) be achievable within five months; and 5) show tangible results. As we expected, some of the ideas were half-baked or unrealistic and the mentors helped to improve them. In some cases, too, progress was uneven, with the bulk of the real work put off until the final months, and we discovered that requiring participants to give a public mid-session presentation of their product helped everyone to keep up. It also inspired new sessions in which participants were taught how to organize and deliver presentations, and how to tell a story.

The projects apprentices chose tended to focus on process improvements: the launch of safety training, streamlining changeovers on packing lines, improving vendor qualification, standardizing drug application procedures, and so forth. Journeymen chose projects which required multi-function teams: redesign a warehouse, open a new quality laboratory, smooth the transition to SAP software, select and screen alternative suppliers. The master craftsmen participants all worked together to devise an entry strategy for the European market.

Meeting Craftspeople: This aspect of the program was the most innovative and perhaps the most rewarding. Employees participated in ice-carving, improv theater, graffiti art, and tai chi as well as sessions with brewers and watchmakers, and visits to the FDA and iconic businesses like W.L. Gore. Apprentices spent a day at the French Pastry School in Chicago, making goodies and comparing chemistry formulas with chefs. On graduation day, they enjoyed an inspiring conversation with Kyle Maynard, a limbless mountaineer, and rang the closing bell at Nasdaq. Although we had to scour our respective networks to enlist these crafters and overcome a variety of logistical challenges (snow, traffic, bus breakdowns) to bring it all together, the results were well worth the effort.

Leading as craft: The program introduced participants to a vast array of concepts, experiences, and practices—including both

rational-technical and artistic approaches. But what about teaching leading as a craft? Certainly the projects and interactions with craftspeople from different walks of life served this end. But we were also attentive, in our workshops, to what Eva Poole aptly calls “leadersmithing.”

- **Craft Thinking:** When leader-teachers led discussions about real-life cases, the participants were constantly challenged to reach beyond their function and “think like a CEO.” And having the actual CEO critique their thinking reinforced the lesson!
- **Craft Doing:** Through exercises on leading a team, persuading reluctant stakeholders, managing conflict, and dealing with resistance to change, participants practiced leadership skills and got feedback from both peers and execs.
- **Craft Identity:** Participants constructed and shared an

Business Improvement projects – Apprentice level

Sample Apprentice Projects at Teligent	Selected Benefits/Savings
• Creating a talent assessment framework	• HR Costs ↓
• Streamlining the drug submission process for the US & Canada	• Cycle time reduced 40 percent
• Designing and delivering training for machine operators	• Efficiency ↑
• Creating a vendor qualification process	• \$12,000 per vendor
• Developing standard procedures for quality control	• Cycle time reduced 20 percent
• Creating an inventory system for labs to track supplies	• 100 percent improvement
• Globalizing regulatory processes for injectables	• Faster approvals
• Mapping the drug submission process	• Reduce deficiencies
• Improving machine set up times by 25 percent	• Savings = 25 percent person hours
• Implementing preventive maintenance for metrology	• Savings = \$100,000
• Developing an audit template for suppliers	• Errors reduced 600 percent
• Eliminating or reducing NDA questions	• Savings = 30 percent person hours
• Creating a process to acquire new instrumentation	• Reduce Outside Testing
• Streamlining the procurement process	• Cycle time +30 percent
• Creating a new website for Teligent Canada	

Craftsman Experiences



Ice Sculpting



Improv Training



Pastry Chefs



Meeting the Market



Inspiring Story Telling

autobiographic timeline to identify the experiences that had shaped their leadership outlooks from childhood on. They also completed a DiSC profile (measuring dominance,

influence, steadiness and conscientiousness) to inform their picture of themselves. Executive mentors further reinforced their individual craft identity.

The emphasis throughout was on reflective practice, encouraging participants to make journal notes about their experiences in-class, on-the-job, and in their projects, and to share them with their mentor and peers, periodically highlighting them through personal leadership stories. This practice, in which tacit knowledge is made more explicit and becomes fodder for collective learning, is in keeping with the principles of work-based learning endemic to craftsmanship.

The organization became more human as personal connections grew stronger.

The Learning Experience

To more organically express the flavor of the craft learning experience, we took notes about program sessions and participant reactions throughout.

Apprentices: “When the apprentices gathered for the first session in Atlantic City the room was unusually quiet and everyone anxious about what was to follow,” recalled one of the twenty-nine participants. “Looking back now, we can see that a special journey was about to begin.” As the apprentices assembled for the first time, they expressed their concerns about the demands on their time, being away from work for two days a month and, in some cases, about having to speak up despite having imperfect English. A session offering an overview of the pharmaceutical industry left some striving to think like CEOs but others wondering “what am I (a chemist or warehouse supervisor) doing here”?

But the participants gradually warmed as they shared their stories and DiSC profiles with one

another, their mentors, and their CEO. As each described their own work and its associated leadership challenges, their minds expanded with broader business knowledge. They found working with craftspeople to be novel and engaging: “Take ice sculpting—you look at that huge block of ice and say no way—but then you start carving and magic happens.” A session on culture asked each participant to bring along an object that, to them, embodied Teligent and to describe its significance. They brought a QC instrument, a hairnet, an approval from the FDA, a football jersey, a letter of thanks from a patient. “I take extreme pride in what we make at Teligent. Regardless of the paycheck, the greatest feeling is knowing that what you do every day is helping someone’s life.”

Before presenting their final projects: “The anxiousness was frightening but the group support was encouraging” commented one. Others reflected on the overall experience: “I was not looking for a job, I was looking for a home and I found it here”; “Skills I learned helped me tremendously, individually and in practice, and I saw the impact in the organization.”

Journeyman: Roughly half of the apprentices moved on to the journeyman program. Their self-knowledge grew as they received 360° feedback. Teamwork was now essential to their success and their leadership skills were tested in cross-functional projects championed by Teligent execs. A visit to inner Detroit opened their eyes to the problems in health care delivery that affect poor neighborhoods and sparked a lively conversation about socially responsible leadership. “I am absolutely a better person,” said one journeyman; “(I) Learned so much from the visits. Understood that leadership comes in so many ways,” reflected another.

Interestingly, many participants found that their leadership lessons from the program also affected their lives off the job. One apprentice graduate described how her newfound skills helped her to become a better parent.

Master Craftsmen: The eight people who were selected to continue into the master craftsmanship phase were entrusted with a global project that required strategic thinking about expanding into new areas. It included technical components (analyzing and synthesizing complex and varied data), artistic elements (preparing to deliver health care in an unfamiliar market and culture), and craft work (creating a plan and persuading the top team and CEO). “Interesting and exhausting” said one participant. “Working across borders and time zones was challenging” said another. “The program offered a great opportunity to gain deep insight into the business while honing our leadership skills.”

Interestingly, many participants found that their leadership lessons from the program also affected their lives off the job. One apprentice graduate described how her newfound skills helped her to become a better parent. Another became a leader at her son’s school. A journeyman graduate talked about taking on a new leadership role with the boy scouts.

The Guild of Craftsmen

In medieval times, a guild functioned as a vocational school, a craft union or association, and a certifying body which ensured the quality and integrity of the goods

and services provided by its members. At Teligent, all program participants were invited to join a Guild of Craftsmen within the company. Graduate master craftsmen govern the Guild and represent it. They help to recruit, select, and socialize with new trainees, contribute to the leadership development program, and serve as cultural ambassadors both inside and outside the company. As one told us, “We now have a better understanding of who and where we are and what it means to be part of the Teligent team.” For the CEO the Guild also creates a forum in which he can be totally open, sharing his feelings so that people understand where he is coming from. He can take off his armor and invite honest appraisal.

From a diverse and divided group of people who barely knew or spoke to each other, a powerful community of leaders emerged.

Impact of the program

The program described above represents a heavy investment, not just financially, but also in the effort and time spent by the CEO and the top team. So is it worth it? While it is impossible to calculate a precise monetary return, the benefits from the program are myriad.

1. Individual growth: As the participants’ remarks testify, the program contributed perceptibly to their personal growth and development of leadership skills (next page – reflections on the program). It also helped many of them to lead more fully in other parts of their lives. Their mentors’ comments highlight the progress participants made in all aspects of the training (next page).

2. **Connection to the top team:** Members of the leadership team developed as mentors, teachers, coaches, and role models. The program brought them closer to young leaders throughout the organization, rather than just those reporting to them directly. Grenfell-Gardner recalls one early session in which he sat on the floor in a crowded room to project slides for a fellow executive. His willingness, even as CEO, to help with this simple task proved a valuable lesson. The organization became more human as personal connections grew stronger.
3. **Breaking down silos and forming a community:** From a diverse and divided group of people who barely knew or spoke to each other, a powerful

community of leaders emerged, ready to work together to build the company's future. Everyone gained a better understanding of the trade-offs necessary to organizational decisions and

new insights into the challenges their colleagues faced. This new perspective helped to erase the tribal splits that can occur between departments and built networks that spanned all levels and functions.

4. **Sustaining culture:** The Guild of Craftsmen is the keeper of the company culture. All members, whether apprentices, journeymen or master craftsmen, act as cultural ambassadors, safeguarding the values of Teligent and promoting behaviors that nourish its culture.
5. **Continuous improvement mindset:** The apprentices took ownership of the company's problems and their solutions. They found ways to improve performance by improving process, adding both value and efficiency. No problem was viewed as someone else's. The program provided them with the tools to bring this perspective to their daily work. They tackled problems beyond their personal expertise, their area of function and even their familiarity. A team of four journeymen (two chemists, a regulatory expert and an IT manager) led a herculean effort to build a warehouse to consolidate six smaller locations.

Mentor Comments to Graduate Journeymen

- "What a transformation! From a shy quiet chemist to a dynamic leader, taking the bull by the horns, embracing ownership and really showing how to get the most out of this great program!"
- "Thrilled to see you continue maturing and growing to manage and coach others. You have a special humility to know your limits and now more courage to push further. #stretching #muscles #driving #delegating"
- "You are a bright person, with a great entrepreneurial spirit! Insightful questions and engaging discussion, combined with technical knowledge, equal a great future!"
- "You had the opportunity to let your obstacles stand in your way, but instead you have persevered despite cultural and physical challenges. I sit here today in awe of your strength, and can only hope it is contagious. #HERO"
- "You have an amazing drive and enthusiasm. You have a lot to do in the coming years, but I'm confident that you will continue to step up. #wowdude #beardnobead #stopsmoking"
- "The first job of a leader is to inspire trust in others. You have met your critical mission. #Trust #Dedicated #YouGotThis #Confidence #TeligentInc"

Reflections on the Craftsmanship program

Leading Self:

- "I was able to see a transformation within myself and my confidence in being a leader."
- "I can now express my thoughts and opinions in meetings without backing down."
- "I learned about listening and then reacting to what people say"
- "Helped me become more self-aware and use my strengths"
- "I learned to set personal goals for myself and achieve them gradually."
- "Improved use of available time, scheduling time to work on my projects."

Leading Others:

- "I developed a better understanding of how to interact with others in the business world."
- "Participating in activities provided insight and opportunities to develop stronger leadership skills."
- "I can be a little less introverted. I have had some reassurance in myself."
- "Gained a better understanding of everyone's role in our processes."
- "I am able to think quicker on my feet and as a result have become more persuasive when presenting my point of view."
- "Many of my peers in the program listened to my input and that was refreshing."

Leading the Business:

- "The LEAN exercise helped to mimic real-life issues."
- "I have developed a network of internal contacts and resources that I did not have before."
- "Got a clear understanding of (the) vision for the future and growth strategies and understand challenges associated with company growth."
- "Connected with departments outside of my functional area and improved my individual impact within the company"
- "Learned more about the pharmaceutical industry as well as Teligent's business model."
- "I can also look at a project with a broader perspective (view from the balcony)."

They were just waiting to be given the permission to grow.

6. **Tangible results:** The program's business improvement projects brought the company significant value and, in some cases, increased efficiency and led to big savings. One of the apprentices created a process for vendor selection which saved the company hundreds of thousands of dollars. Journeyman projects included the design

and construction of a new lab, a warehouse at a new facility, and the implementation of new systems and processes. The master craftsman project, meanwhile, contributed tangibly to the company's growth strategy. Indeed, all Guild members contributed to cost cutting initiatives that saved the company thousands of dollars.

Reflecting on his experience with the program, Grenfell-Gardner summed it up aptly: "I realized that there was so much latent value in the organization waiting to be unleashed. They were just waiting to be given the permission to grow."

Future Applications

This novel approach to leadership education invites further experimentation. We believe that the principles of developing leaders as craftsmen can be applied in any organization and that our program can be adapted in length and content according to that organization's needs. In university education, there is a movement to bring arts-based and studio pedagogy into leadership classrooms and, in the spirit of craftsmanship, to make work-based learning an integral part of curricula. Companies, too, are moving toward using leader-teachers in executive programs, emphasizing mentoring and role-modeling, and using project- and service-based learning to train future executives.

For those looking for background information on leading as craft, we

have included a list of recommended books below. For those looking to craft new forms of leadership development, we wish you the best. ■

Recommended Books on Leadership as Craft

DePree, Max. *Leadership is an Art*. Dell, 1989.

Hatch, Mary Jo, Monika Kostera, and Andrzej K. Kozminski. *The Three Faces of Leadership: Manager, Artist, Priest*. John Wiley & Sons, 2009.

Minzberg, Henry. *Managers Not MBAs*, Berrett-Koehler, 2004.

Mirvis, Philip H., Karen Ayas, and George Roth. *To the Desert and Back: The Story of One of the Most Dramatic Business Transformations on Record*. John Wiley & Sons, 2003.

Poole, Eve. *Leadersmithing: Revealing the Trade Secrets of Leadership*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017.

Raelin, Joseph A. *Work-Based Learning: Bridging Knowledge and Action in the Workplace*. John Wiley & Sons, 2008.

Taylor, Steven. *Leadership Craft, Leadership Art*. Springer, 2012.



Dr. Philip Mirvis is an organizational psychologist whose research and private practice concern large-scale organizational change, leadership development, and the role of business in society. He is a senior research fellow for the Global Network on Corporate Citizenship and Babson Social Innovation Lab. A regular contributor to academic and professional

books, he has authored or edited fourteen books, and received the Academy of Management's Distinguished Scholar-Practitioner career achievement award. pmirv@aol.com



Dr. Karen Ayas is a founding partner of the Ripples Group and president of the Ripples Business Academy. She is a management consultant, educator, coach, and author with expertise in large-scale transformation and leadership development. Ayas has a deep passion for education and teaching and, for the past fifteen years, has been a professor of management practice at Babson College School of Executive Education, training over a thousand leaders. kayas@ripplesgroup.com



Jason Grenfell-Gardner was the President and Chief Executive Officer of Teligent, Inc., where he led its transformation into an R&D-centered pharmaceutical company. He has extensive international experience in pharma, in leadership, and on several boards, and earned an MA in economics from the University of St Andrews in Scotland and an MBA from INSEAD. Grenfell-Gardner is a regular contributor to the American Management Association's Young Presidents Organization. grenfellgardner@gmail.com

Endnotes

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