

# Cover Story

# Blanchard

Building Tomorrow's Leaders Today

**C**reating Inspired Leaders through Dynamic, Human-Powered Learning Experiences

When it comes to organizational success, most leaders of winning companies would say their most important asset is their people. While factors like strategy, systems, processes, and technology are important, ultimately it is the people who breathe life into an organization and determine its fate.

*People make the most difference in an organization.* This simple yet profound belief has formed the philosophical bedrock of Blanchard® (formerly The Ken Blanchard Companies®) since its founding in 1979 by legendary leadership gurus Ken and Margie Blanchard. Now in its forty-fifth year, the company is dedicated to its mission.

## Vision

*Leaders Powered for Good*

## Our Mission

*Blanchard's leadership experts, proven*

*content, and dynamic learning experiences maximize individual achievement and organizational performance.*

“Treating people with respect, building trusting relationships, and giving them the skills to achieve their goals—that’s what helps everyone thrive,” says Blanchard CEO Scott Blanchard, son of Ken and Margie. “Those core values are woven into our DNA.”

From humble beginnings, Blanchard has evolved into a global force—pioneering award-winning development solutions that merge traditional principles with cutting-edge technology and modern learning experiences. The game-changing SLII® leadership model typifies the company’s innovative yet human-centric approach. By equipping leaders with a framework for analyzing an individual’s performance readiness on a goal or task and implementing the appropriate leadership style, SLII® encourages managers to bring out the best in each of their people.

Other research-based training programs such as Building Trust, Legendary Service®, Coaching Essentials®, and Self Leadership continue to drive the company’s impact across diverse industries and cultures. Yet as it grows, the heart of Blanchard’s work remains steadfastly focused on elevating the workforce experience.

“We design solutions that strengthen corporate culture, support rapid growth, and ensure that people reach their true potential,” Scott Blanchard explains. “We know when you invest in your people, everything else follows.” This fervent belief in the transformative power of respectful, ethical leadership has cemented Blanchard’s reputation as an industry pioneer. As the leadership development space evolves, the organization stands poised to continue breaking new ground.

With Scott Blanchard and president Debbie Ung committed to uphold Ken and Margie's famous legacy, the organization is doubling down on its







quest to share research-validated wisdom and inspire leaders around the world to elevate their teams. In doing so, Blanchard promotes its tried-and-true principle that healthy cultures are essential for great organizations.

*Below are the interview highlights:*

### **The Pursuit of Impactful Leadership**

Scott Blanchard was born into the realm of leadership development, with his parents immersing him in the topic even during family dinners. After graduating from Cornell University, Scott ventured into the hotel industry, where as both a follower and a leader he experienced firsthand the profound impact leaders can have on people and organizations.

For many years, the Blanchard organization conducted their leadership courses primarily in the classroom setting. As time passed, Scott and his leadership team kept an eye on technology trends and adjusted their offerings to remain relevant. This method of forecasting came in handy when, years before the pandemic struck, the organization introduced multiple virtual training options that would essentially keep the company afloat in 2020 and beyond.

Debbie Ung's journey into the learning and development industry began immediately after college. The more she delved into the field, the more intrigued she became by how profoundly individual performance influences organizational performance. This connection, especially for leaders, resonated deeply with her.

Leaders guide people and shape performance, Ung realized, which underscores the importance for leaders to learn how to positively impact the employee experience. Leadership, in Ung's view, is a service—an obligation

to promote an environment and culture where individuals feel safe, respected, and empowered to thrive. When employees flourish, organizations prosper.

### **Tailoring Development for Diverse Learners**

The best leaders understand that a constantly changing working environment can challenge the developmental needs of individuals as well as their ability to learn new mindsets and skill sets. Blanchard enhances learning for all through innovative technology, meaningful connection points, diverse learning methods, and flexible modalities. The goal is to develop learners in the flow of work, optimize performance, and drive business results.

Blanchard delivers exceptional content through a variety of contemporary learning methods and access points across the globe, which include off-the-shelf and custom learning solutions, coaching solutions, public courses, training for trainers, keynotes, and community networks. For example, Propel by Blanchard™ is a membership-based online community that provides critical leadership skills, management best practices, and easy-to-use resources when and where they are needed. And Blanchard Community is a free, active community space where leaders can come to connect, learn, and grow, complete with training resources and virtual events from leading authors and experts.

### **Approach to Transformative Learning**

When it comes to crafting transformative learning experiences, Blanchard's approach is rooted in the collective wisdom and diverse perspectives of its team members. The organization engages with each client

through dedicated customer success teams of industry professionals with varied expertise and backgrounds. Central to each team is an account executive who serves as the primary liaison, guiding the client throughout the entire process. Complementing this role is a solutions architect, who is tasked with designing scalable solutions tailored to meet the client's unique needs. Project managers, facilitators, coaches, and other specialists are brought in as necessary, ensuring a comprehensive and tailored approach to serving each client's needs. By leveraging the collective experience and expertise of its multifaceted team, Blanchard ensures the learning journeys it crafts are not only transformative but also inclusive and resonant with the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of the learners it serves. This holistic approach enables the organization to transcend traditional boundaries and foster an environment where people feel seen, valued, and empowered to embrace new learnings.

### **Redefining Leadership Development**

Another distinguishing Blanchard feature is its collaborative approach and dedication to building trusting partnerships with every client. The organization recognizes each client is unique and tailors its solutions accordingly. By applying its Five Drivers of Learning Impact—key influencer support; strategic integration; effective design and delivery; follow-up and reinforcement; and demonstrated tangible value—Blanchard sets clients up for success. The company leverages its extensive reach to meet clients wherever they are, whether through in-person, digital, virtual, public classes, off-the-shelf, or custom delivery methods.



Flexibility is at the core of Blanchard's approach to designing and delivering content, enabling the organization to help clients achieve specific talent development goals. This diligence toward client-centricity has been a hallmark of Blanchard's enduring legacy, positioning the company as a trailblazer in the realm of human-powered learning experiences and team performance.

### Tailored Learning for the Modern Workforce

With a focus on the demands of the contemporary workforce, Blanchard offers multiple delivery options and modalities that enable learners to acquire knowledge at their own pace or through shorter sessions, eliminating the need for extended absences from work to attend traditional training. This innovative approach not only accommodates learners' schedules but also stimulates immediate practical application by allowing them to integrate new skills and insights into their daily work routines.

In addition to its renowned in-person learning experiences, the company provides virtual instructor-led training, asynchronous online learning opportunities, microlearning activities, and just-in-time tutorials. These diverse offerings cater to the varying learning preferences and schedules of today's professionals.

Blanchard also recognizes the value of collaborative learning and has implemented tools that facilitate the sharing of insights and the exploration of questions among learners, which fosters a sense of community and collective growth. Embracing the potential of technology, the organization has also developed mobile applications and AI-powered chatbots, ensuring that learners have on-demand

access to information and resources to further enhance their learning journey.

### Catalyzing Transformative Growth

Blanchard's learning experiences serve as catalysts for profound personal and professional transformation. Scott Blanchard attests to the enduring impact these programs have on leaders and managers, often altering their perspectives and mindsets forever.

Through Blanchard's teachings, such as the renowned "Catch people doing something right" philosophy introduced by Ken Blanchard, learners develop measurable insights—shifts in their cognitive processes that come to light when encountering similar situations. Acknowledging this positive mindset fosters a profound reframing, enabling individuals to focus on their strengths and achievements rather than dwelling on their shortcomings. This paradigm shift becomes a lifelong guiding principle, influencing not only professional interactions but also personal lives and relationships.

Blanchard's approach extends beyond mere knowledge transfer; it is a comprehensive learning experience designed to engage learners deeply and equip them with practical tools and techniques for seamless knowledge application. A prime example is the SLII® chatbot, a portable and easily accessible resource that provides on-demand coaching and guidance to leaders, reinforcing the skills and mindsets they have acquired.

By empowering learners with not only theoretical foundations but also practical reinforcement tools, Blanchard ensures that the newfound skills and perspectives go beyond the classroom, enabling learners to become agents of progress and transformation

within their organizations and beyond.

### Ensuring Accessible Leadership Development

With perseverance to make leadership development accessible to everyone, everywhere, Blanchard's multifaceted strategy ensures its programs reach a wide audience. Its solutions transcend geographical boundaries and embrace the evolving work landscape.

Coupled with online collaborative designs, Blanchard's digital and virtual modalities accommodate large cohorts, eliminating the constraints of physical proximity. The company also provides specialized training in leading virtual and hybrid teams, which helps leaders thrive in the new work environment.

Considering the diverse linguistic landscape, Blanchard solutions are available in multiple languages, ensuring leadership lessons can be disseminated across cultural boundaries. The company also has cultivated a global network of facilitators to enable consistent delivery while respecting regional and cultural nuances.

Blanchard's holistic approach demonstrates its aim of democratizing leadership development, equipping individuals worldwide to reach their full potential and build an excellence culture within their industry.

### Shaping the Future of Leadership Development

The people of Blanchard do more than deliver exceptional leadership development programs; they are dedicated to staying ahead of emerging trends and improving their program offerings.

Blanchard's in-house innovation lab, a center where learning strategy, experience, and technology combine, is

at the heart of its creative approach. Enhanced by a strong research program, the lab helps Blanchard stay on the cutting edge of new developments in enterprise learning technologies, measurement and evaluation, design thinking, performance excellence, and learning experience design.

Given the demanding needs and expectations of today's learners, Blanchard has made a steadfast commitment to leveraging technology to design and develop training programs that meet the needs of learners in every work environment. This devotion is exemplified by the company's proprietary Blanchard Exchange learning platform, a delivery mechanism for the company's learning programs and tools.

Blanchard's forward-thinking approach extends to strategic partnerships with technology solution providers, so that the organization remains well equipped to support future needs in the leadership development field. This multidimensional method strengthens Blanchard's status as a pioneer in the industry, expanding the boundaries of leadership development and allowing individuals and organizations to achieve unparalleled levels of success.



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