



“100% of participants in the Advanced Leadership program gained new and important skills and were more engaged in their role as a leader.”

Client Story

Leader Training Improves Performance and Well-Being at Arizona Department of Health Services

The Arizona Department of Health Services wanted to improve retention and foster workforce well-being while supporting strategic goals at the agency. “Our workforce was dealing with rapid expansion as well as constant change, and well-being was identified as a top area of concern through team surveys,” says Lynn Harrison, workforce development director at ADHS. “We knew focusing on skill development that positively influences the relationship between team members and their managers would help us address challenges and mitigate stress. Offering training to build skills and confidence seemed like the best way to support our leaders, so we worked with Blanchard to design and deliver learning paths for various levels of leaders within the agency.”

The Leader Essentials program was created for new and emerging leaders throughout the agency. The sessions included content from Self Leadership, Building Trust, and Blanchard Management Essentials®. The Advanced Leadership program was designed for more experienced leaders. It included training in SLII®, Building Trust, Leading People Through Change®, and the Communication Essentials portion of Blanchard Management Essentials®.



Lynn Harrison,

Participants in both learning journeys were able to access self-study courses through the Blanchard Exchange platform. After completing the self-study work, participants met once a week for a virtual instructor-led session run by a Blanchard facilitator to discuss what they'd learned and how to put skills into practice.

Participants were selected by their leaders to attend the learning experience. Training was delivered to cohorts of 25 people. As part of the design of the program, each participant was assigned a success partner. These partners held each other accountable, worked together to practice skills, and discussed their experiences, challenges, and successes.

"The success partner program and the use of breakouts in the weekly virtual sessions help build a community of learners," Harrison says. "We pair people from different parts of our agency to create social support networks throughout the organization, breaking down silos and fostering connection and belonging."

The Results and Business Impact of Training

To measure the effectiveness of the training, Harrison and her team focused on level three and level four evaluations. "In addition to the post-training survey to measure data from the participants, we also utilized data from their direct reports or immediate managers to corroborate the results."

For the Leader Essentials program survey, participants were asked if they acquired new and valuable skills and knowledge and if they were able to apply those skills back on the job. The immediate managers of the participants were asked if they observed improved leader behaviors in their direct reports after the training.

Results from the participants include:

- 97% acquired new and valuable skills or knowledge from the learning experience.
- 94% were able to apply the new skills or knowledge on the job to some or to a great extent.
- 89% were able to improve leader behaviors, with 37% showing significant improvement and 11% showing exceptional improvement.
- 92% believed the improvements had a positive impact on their relationship with their immediate manager, peers, or others.
- 83% rated the guidance they received from their manager when they started applying new behaviors back on the job as fair or high.
- 89% felt more engaged and motivated in their role as a leader.
- 81% felt more committed to remaining with the agency as a result of the development training.
- 89% felt their improved leader behaviors helped both their own and their teams' performance. They estimated performance improvement at 48.38%.

Results from the immediate managers include:

- 100% saw improved leader behaviors in their direct reports, with 61.25% showing significant or exceptional improvement.
- 80% felt the improved leader skills of their direct reports helped their direct reports or others improve overall performance. They estimated overall performance improvement at 52.63%.
- This data was used to calculate a conservative estimate of real-world performance improvement at 25.79%.

For the Advanced Leadership program survey, participants were asked if they acquired new and valuable skills and knowledge and if they were able to apply those skills back on the job. The direct reports of the participants were asked if they observed their leaders applying new skills from the training.

Results from the participants include:

- 100% acquired new and valuable skills or knowledge from the learning experience.
- 96% were able to apply the new skills or knowledge on the job to some or to a great extent.
- 94% indicated they were able to improve behaviors, with 45% showing significant improvement and 5% showing exceptional improvement.
- 100% believed the improvements had a positive impact on their relationship with their leader, peers, or others.
- 92% rated as fair or high the guidance they received from their manager when they started applying new behaviors back on the job.
- 100% felt more engaged and motivated in their role as a leader.
- 92% felt more committed to remaining with the agency as a result of the development training.
- 84% felt their improved leader behaviors helped their performance or the performance of others. They estimated performance improvement at 37.88%.

Results from the direct reports of the leaders who went through the training include:

- 100% observed their leader applying new skills from the training.
- 99% observed their leader improve their behaviors, with 68.97% seeing significant or exceptional improvement.
- 93% felt more engaged as a result of their leader's improved skills.
- 82% felt more committed to staying at the organization as a result of their leader's improved skills.
- 86.21% felt their leader's improved behaviors helped them improve their own performance. They estimated overall performance improvement at 52.59%.
- This data was used to calculate an isolated performance improvement at 31.26%.



"I'm extremely happy with the results we've received," Harrison says. "To be able to share with our leadership team that 100% of participants in the Advanced Leadership program gained new and important skills and were more engaged in their role as a leader was a remarkable experience. You could feel the positive energy of the group as we realized the programs are having an extraordinarily positive impact on participants, their direct reports and managers, and the agency as a whole.

"We structured the learning journeys and sustainability strategies on the [US Surgeon General's Framework for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being](#). Working within this framework ensured our efforts aligned with our organizational culture, which includes fostering a high-performing, engaged workforce in which team members feel connected, supported, and inspired to grow and thrive. The comments from the open text portion of the survey are proof that we hit the mark."

Overall, Harrison considered the partnership and the courses a success, especially given the time they had to implement the training.

"I am a real planner and would have liked a bit more time to plan the training—but when I saw the results, I was glad we rolled it out quickly," Harrison says. "And that's my advice to people: it doesn't have to be perfect; you just need to make progress. Just get started."

She also notes the early success is generating support for their sustainability efforts, including communities of practice, microlearning, and refresher workshops being designed and implemented by Madeline Robles, leadership development manager.

The success is echoed in the feedback provided by participants and the people they work with. Ultimately, access to these leadership courses has improved leaders' abilities to guide their teams and to offer support and solutions tailored to the needs of individuals.

Comments from participants in the Leader Essentials program include:

"I think it has improved my communication with my manager to be able to clearly let her know what kind of support I need, and to be honest about my capabilities and capacity."

"My 1:1's with my direct reports are well received and have fostered more trust and transparency."

"I was able to address some issues with my direct management and tell my truth."

"Self Leadership diagnosing was very fascinating, helping me to better understand my comprehension levels."

"After taking the leadership training, I was promoted to a manager role within my team. This course has been very helpful in guiding my 1:1s with staff and figuring out different ways to support different types of teammates that are in different stages of their goal setting."

Comments from the immediate managers of participants in the Leader Essentials program include:

"I have observed more confidence in [my direct report's] performance and decision making."

"[My direct report] takes initiative to identify not only issues and barriers, but actionable solutions to issues and barriers. She does an exceptional job listening to the needs of her staff and bringing them to my attention with actionable next steps."

"[My direct report] consistently listens for understanding, sets and follows goals, and encourages/recognizes staff contributions."

"[My direct report] supported a staff member with identifying goals for growth and improvement. The goals are regularly reviewed, updated, and evaluated."

"Communication has been better all around. They have been communicating more with me and asking for assistance. They have improved their relationships with their staff."

Comments from participants in the Advanced Leadership program include:

"It's helped me connect more with my team and better understand their needs and how I can provide the items they need in order to be the most successful."

"I have been promoted into a new role overseeing more direct staff since completing the learning experience. Each of the staff that I oversee has their own direction and support needs. Being able to match and adapt my leadership style has greatly impacted my relationship and success with each of them."

"It improved how I showed up for my team members, which in turn improved their performance."

"After practicing diagnosing and matching with one of my direct reports, I have noticed an improvement in their follow-through and task completion (timely)."

Comments from the direct reports of participants in the Advanced Leadership program include:

"I have noticed that they are willing to be more adaptive and to listen to other perspectives."

"I feel like she takes all of our situations into account when talking to us and is very flexible with us. She understands how we work best and she trusts us, which helps our working relationship with her as a supervisor."

"When you work with someone who cares about you, it makes you want to give the best performance you can."

"Makes me feel more motivated than before, the fact they are more in tune with me makes me feel more of a team."

"I am able to complete my tasks with greater consistency due to the constant communication we share."



Enable leaders at every level to become the ultimate agents of progress and transformation for your organization. Visit us at www.blanchard.com to learn more.

blanchard

blanchard.com