

Honing Leadership Skills for High-Potential Leaders of Color

CASE STUDY



CLIENT PROFILE & CHALLENGE

One of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world who develops and markets prescription drugs, vaccines, biologic therapies, and animal health products for the global marketplace understood that its talent pool needed to better represent its diverse group of customers and patients.

The company is strongly committed to diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its global business and considers diversity in management, both from a gender and racial/ethnic perspective, a key performance indicator and tracks its progress in this area. Company data revealed an opportunity to improve diversity at higher levels of the organization.

The company sought to create a leadership development experience that would prepare high-potential African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian American leaders for senior leadership positions. The organization also wanted to help prospective senior leaders of color develop stronger networks inside the company to build a culture of inclusion.

CLIENT: Major pharmaceutical company
LOCATION: Headquartered in the U.S. and operating worldwide
SIZE: Over 69,000 employees



SOLUTION & RESULTS

The company partnered with CCL to develop the Diverse Leadership Program (DLP). The program aimed to help participants focus on 4 key leadership competencies critical for success within the organization using the acronym PINS.

- P** – Developing effective leadership **presence**
- I** – Understanding the power of **influence** and building strategic relationships inside the organization
- N** – Learning to develop and leverage strategic **networks** across divisions and functions
- S** – Deepening **self-awareness** to strengthen presence, emotional intelligence, relationships, and leadership skills

A team of experts from CCL collaborated with the company to create and facilitate a leadership development experience for cohorts of 25-30 high-potential African America, Latino/Hispanic, and Asian American leaders.

The initiative included 2 on-site experiences and numerous additional touchpoints to develop relationships with senior company leaders. Participants took part in virtual/remote learning, experiential activities, small team collaboration, and coaching delivered by CCL coaches.

Our facilitators sought to create a psychologically safe environment for participants, which research has shown to be critical for high-performance teams. Senior executives were frequently present during the face-to-face experience, but facilitators designated parts of the program for participants and facilitators only to create psychological safety and foster candid discussions

The experience also adopted innovative learning methods. For example, an artificial intelligence-based tool provided realistic, tailored feedback to participants as they practiced presentations – critical to developing executive presence.

In addition to sharpening their own leadership skills, participants also learned from each other to understand how their diverse peers with different racial/ethnic backgrounds successfully influenced the culture at the organization to provide the full potential of diversity through the benefit of accumulated knowledge.

The high-potentials selected for the experience said it made them better leaders and prepared them to advance within the company.

In addition, there's evidence the program was effective at preparing participants for senior leadership positions. Within a few months of completing the experience, **8 of 26 participants received promotions to executive director level** — a 30% rate, and higher than the promotion rate for the overall key talent pool at the company.

The the company's DLP also won a gold award for Best Unique or Innovative Leadership Development Program in the Brandon Hall Group's Human Capital Management Excellence Awards.

“*The program was fantastic...The executive evening discussions were amazing and very well thought out. It was an honor to be part of this experience.*”

—Participant

“*I love the networking experiences, practical tools, and the bonds I was able to build with my fellow participants. I was able to utilize some of the tools I have learned in my daily work. It's been a great experience and by far the best training program I have attended*”

—Participant

BY THE NUMBERS

(Participant ratings on a 1-5 point scale)

- 5.0** Overall satisfaction with the company's Diverse Leadership Program
- 4.8** The skills & knowledge I learned from DLP apply to my job
- 4.9** DLP helped me improve my impact on the company's success
- 4.7** Because of DLP, I can influence more effectively
- 4.6** DLP enhanced my ability to effectively give & receive feedback
- 4.8** I better recognize my strengths & developmental areas as a leader

PARTNER WITH US

At CCL, we understand how diversity and inclusion initiatives can help build a foundation for real change and greater business results. We can partner with your organization to create customized leadership solutions to shift mindsets, behaviors, and practices towards more equitable, diverse, and inclusive teams and organizations.

Learn more: ccl.org/EDI

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