

Developing Future Leaders for High-Growth Indian Companies: New Perspectives

JULY 15, 2008



FOR PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

A RESEARCH OVERVIEW

BASED ON THE LESSONS OF EXPERIENCE-INDIA RESEARCH PROJECT

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■ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For businesses within and outside India, an exhilarating era of expansive global growth has arrived. Specifically in India, many home-grown businesses are seeking to double, triple and quadruple their revenues over the next decade, if not sooner. Companies are therefore beginning to show great interest in leadership development and corporate India is increasingly investing in leadership training and development.

But where and how are the most important “lessons of leadership” learned and what are those lessons? To investigate these important questions, the *Lessons of Experience – India* research project was jointly undertaken by the Tata Management Training Center (TMTC) and the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL-Asia) in 2006.

Eight homegrown global Indian companies participated, representing manufacturing, banking and financial services, pharmaceuticals, and conglomerates. Research findings are based on in-depth interviews with 71 executives at or above the level of general manager. Interviewees were asked to describe three key events or experiences that had a lasting impact on how they currently lead and manage and what they learned from their experiences.

Some of the new perspectives provided by this study on leadership development in India are that:

- Leadership is learned from job experiences and not in classrooms; and the events during the manager’s work life from which leadership is typically learned include: challenging assignments, inspiring superiors and bosses, and adverse situations.
- Almost half of all events cited as a source of lessons about leadership are challenging assignments.
- Managing and motivating subordinates – the 2nd most important lesson learned and cited by more than one-third of all interviewees – is primarily learned from positive role models and bosses who are coaches.
- 65% of all lessons learned are not about running the business, but about leading other people and leading oneself.

The research findings raise critical questions concerning how leadership development is implemented, such as:

- How can on-the-job experiences be leveraged and emphasized more than coursework and training?
- Can challenging assignments be more intentionally allocated to create developmental opportunities for managers identified for leadership roles?
- What processes are needed to customize assignments to meet the developmental needs of high potential managers?
- How significantly can leadership development be impacted by improving bosses’ knowledge and ability to be positive role models, coaches and catalysts?

We invite you to join with us in research and practice to tackle one of the most compelling issues of our time: Developing competent leadership.

■ INTRODUCTION

For businesses within and outside India, an exhilarating era of expansive global growth has arrived. Specifically in India, many home-grown businesses are seeking to double, triple and quadruple their revenues over the next decade, if not sooner. Companies are therefore beginning to show great interest in leadership development to become competitive. Corporate India is increasingly investing in leadership training and development.

But where and how are the most important “lessons of leadership” learned and what are those lessons? Is the necessary knowledge and skill acquired in the classrooms of premier business schools or found in the pages of current bestsellers by management gurus? And are training and development programs the best approach to developing future leaders for high-growth Indian companies?

To investigate these important questions, the *Lessons of Experience – India* research project was jointly undertaken by the Tata Management Training Center (TMTTC) and the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL-Asia) in 2006. Based on the findings of this study, we propose that the essence of leadership is learned from specific job experiences, and not primarily from business and management schools or from ad hoc training and development programs. Further, leadership learning involves new behaviors and perspectives for running oneself and relationships, not just for running the business organization.

This raises the question of which experiences matter. One could assume that climbing the corporate ladder, or bringing together the best possible team, or opening an office in another region of the country, are the kinds of experiences during which executives learn the intricate skills and the craft of leadership. Such assumptions are based on anecdotal rather than grounded evidence. In this context, the *Lessons of Experience – India* research is a pioneering effort to gain systematic knowledge about how leadership development can happen in India.

Purpose of report

In this overview, we provide evidence that there are specific experiences or key events from which leadership lessons can be consciously extracted. Based on the analysis of key events in the lives of Indian business leaders, we propose that leadership capability development has two drivers: Challenging assignments; and inspiring bosses and superiors. Working in tandem, these twin drivers can help any Indian company to increase its throughput of future leaders. We also identify the critical leadership lessons, of which some may not be taught at management schools -- such as the craft of managing self and relationships, and understanding the deeper meaning of leadership.

Why leadership development?

In India, as elsewhere, the global growth of a company depends on its developing effective leaders. Human resource professionals and others responsible for leader development are looking for more effective ways of understanding and approaching their task. Increasingly, they see development as a process that takes place over time, rather than as the outcome of a single or multiple events. They also see the process as integrated with day-to-day work and going beyond classroom training. More and more attention is being paid to the question of how effective systems can be designed to support both a work and classroom based process of leader development over time.

To increase the supply of future leaders for their company, senior executives need a deep understanding of how leader development happens, both inside and outside the classroom. We need to know what kinds of events leaders experience as developmental and what it is they learn from these key events. And we need to know what capabilities are needed over time for leaders to improve their effectiveness in the face of ever increasing work and life complexity. Only with this kind of in-depth knowledge can senior leaders of Indian companies intentionally provide the right experiences to the right people at the right time.

■ BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

At the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL), one research question has been a core focus for nearly thirty-five years: What are the processes by which executives learn, grow, and change over the course of their careers? Our original “lessons of experience” (LOE) research in the U.S. showed that managers report significant learning from the following types of experiences:

- Challenging assignments (involving job transitions, creating change, high levels of responsibility, managing boundaries, and dealing with diversity).
- Developmental relationships (including mentors, bosses, coaches, and developmental networks).
- Hardships (such as mistakes/failures, career setbacks, personal trauma, downsizing, problem employees, and discrimination).

This seminal study conducted in the early 1980’s has been replicated over the years within and outside CCL, including Japan and the Netherlands. The research methodology adapts the critical incident technique and has been enormously fruitful. Many publications, assessment instruments and reports have been developed describing pathways to effective leadership for different populations such as women, high potentials, and global managers. Among them:

- *Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Can Women Reach the Top of America’s Largest Corporations?* (1987) by R. P. White, A.M. Morrison, and E. Van Velsor.
- *High Flyers: Developing the Next Generation of Leaders* (1998) by M.W. McCall, Jr.
- *The Job Challenge Profile Facilitator’s Guide* (1999) by C.D. McCauley, P.J. Ohlott, and M.N. Ruderman.
- *Developing Global Executives: Lessons of International Experience* (2002) by M. W. McCall, Jr. and G. P. Hollenbeck
- *Key Events and Lessons for Managers in a Diverse Workforce* (2003) by C. A. Douglas.
- *Developmental Assignments: Creating Learning Experiences Without Changing Jobs* (2006) by C.D. McCauley.

With the launch of the *Lessons of Experience – Asia* research studies in 2006, we are extending our core knowledge about how business leaders learn, grow, and develop in India, Singapore, and China. The Singapore project breaks new ground by including public sector leaders.

Research methodology

Experience tells us that face-to-face conversations are required to obtain clear and extensive information about how development happens over time. With the objective of gaining in-depth information, 60 – 90 minute semi-structured interviews were conducted. The interview questions were provided in advance, so that the senior executives participating in the study would have time to reflect on their career and life history in preparation for the interview session.

Who was interviewed?

Over 100 top and senior level Indian business leaders were selected from eight home-grown Indian companies that have established themselves globally.¹ These companies were intentionally chosen to represent various industries (manufacturing, banking and financial services, pharmaceuticals, and conglomerates) with organisational headquarters in the east, west, north and south of India. Findings discussed in this report are based on the analysis of 71 interviews (see Tables 1 and 2). Interviews of poor quality, or with executives who did not meet sample criteria, were discarded.

Table 1

DEMOGRAPHICS	
GENDER Male: 68 Female: 3	Number of Companies: 8
AGE < 50 yrs: 39 >50 yrs: 32	INDUSTRY SECTORS • Manufacturing • Financial Services • Pharmaceuticals • Conglomerate
WORK EXPERIENCE >15 years	

Table 2

LEVEL	
President	9
CEO, MD, Dy, MD	10
Sr. VP, Exec VP, VP	13
COO, CE	9
SBU Head, Director	11
Sr. GM, Dy GM, GM, AGM	19

What were they asked?

For gathering their lessons of experience, we asked two questions:

- Looking back over your career, what are the three key events or experiences that had a lasting impact on you and influenced how you lead and manage today?
- What did you learn from these events or experiences?

Responses have been analyzed and the most relevant and applicable findings are described in this report.

To learn about the business environment in which senior executives in India operate, we also asked:

- What is the biggest challenge you are facing as a leader now, or expect to face in the next few years?
- Can you share a work experience or challenge that may be unique to working in India or with Indians? What did you learn?

The analysis of responses to these questions will be addressed in a future report.

Overall results

Our qualitative and quantitative analysis of the LOE data yielded 309 events and 575 lessons learned. These were initially sorted into 26 distinct event and 29 distinct lesson categories and further sorted into four clusters of key events and four clusters of lessons learned (see Tables 3 and 6). The top-line findings with immediate practical value for the companies participating in the research project are presented next.

¹ The names of the eight companies are being withheld until permission is obtained from each company that they are willing to be publicly cited for participating in the Lessons of Experience - India research study.

■ KEY EVENTS IN INDIA

Key events are experiences that drive learning and change. They are critical or memorable experiences that develop the managerial and leadership skills of the executive in a significant way.

Four clusters of events will be described and all 26 key events listed by cluster (see Figure 3 and Table 4). Within clusters, we focus on the 11 events that are most frequently cited (by approximately 15% to 40% of interviewees), most likely to be developmental, and more feasible for a company to address (see asterisked events in Table 5).

Why four event clusters?

Obviously, we embarked on this research project without a clear picture of what the data from India would tell us. We were surprised, and yet not surprised, that broad event clusters for business leaders in India are comparable to those found in the U.S. Concurrent LOE research with business organisations in China and Singapore are surfacing comparable findings.

(In this report, we do not aim to compare findings from studies in different countries. But it is worth noting that the variations occur not at the broad cluster level, but in the detailed descriptions of events; and a sub-set of events are country-specific. For example, in the India data, rural assignments, catalyst bosses, dealing with labor/trade unions, and working for a non-Indian MNC emerge as distinct categories. And examples of key events missing from the India data, but present in the U.S. data include: demotions/missed promotions/lousy jobs; subordinate performance problems; impact of race; and managing at a distance.)

The four event clusters are as follows.

- **Challenging assignments** (CA) come from a posting, promotion, or task assigned to the manager by their company. The assignment is typically difficult and sometimes requires struggle. Different kinds of assignments sharpen different leadership abilities. Challenging assignments were cited by 49% of interviewees.
- **Inspiring superiors and bosses** (IS/B) directly and indirectly support (or do not support) learning and the learner. Their influence is possibly more powerful than they themselves realize. Inspiring superiors and bosses were cited by 17% of interviewees.
- **Adverse situations** (AS) are imposed by the environment. Usually, the difficulties experienced during the event are not within the control of the company or its executives. Adverse situations were cited by 10% of interviewees.
- **Personal events** (PE) include life experiences and personal career and life choices. Excepting “early job experience” and “coursework and training”, these events are outside company control. Core lessons are learned that influence leadership aspirations and performance. Personal events were cited by 23% of interviewees.

One finding of particular interest is the role that coursework and training plays in the story of leader development. Cited by 14% of interviewees, and last on our list of Top 11 (see Table 5), coursework and training seems to have significantly less impact than the more frequently cited events clustered under challenging assignments and inspiring superiors and bosses. In section 4, our analysis of the event-lesson link further reveals that the lesson most often learned from coursework and training is the improved understanding of individuals and individual differences (see Table 9). These findings suggest that for developing future leaders, it is more important to emphasize and leverage on-the-job experiences over coursework and training.

We also point out that it seems more feasible for organisations to provide challenging assignments and to educate superiors/bosses on how to inspire subordinates; and for the most part, it is less feasible to control adverse situations and personal events. So we recommend that companies committed to accelerating leadership development focus on the intentional use of challenging assignments and a variety of approaches to helping superiors/bosses to become inspiring.

Figure 3
Distribution of Events Cited by Indian Executives
(N = 309 Events)

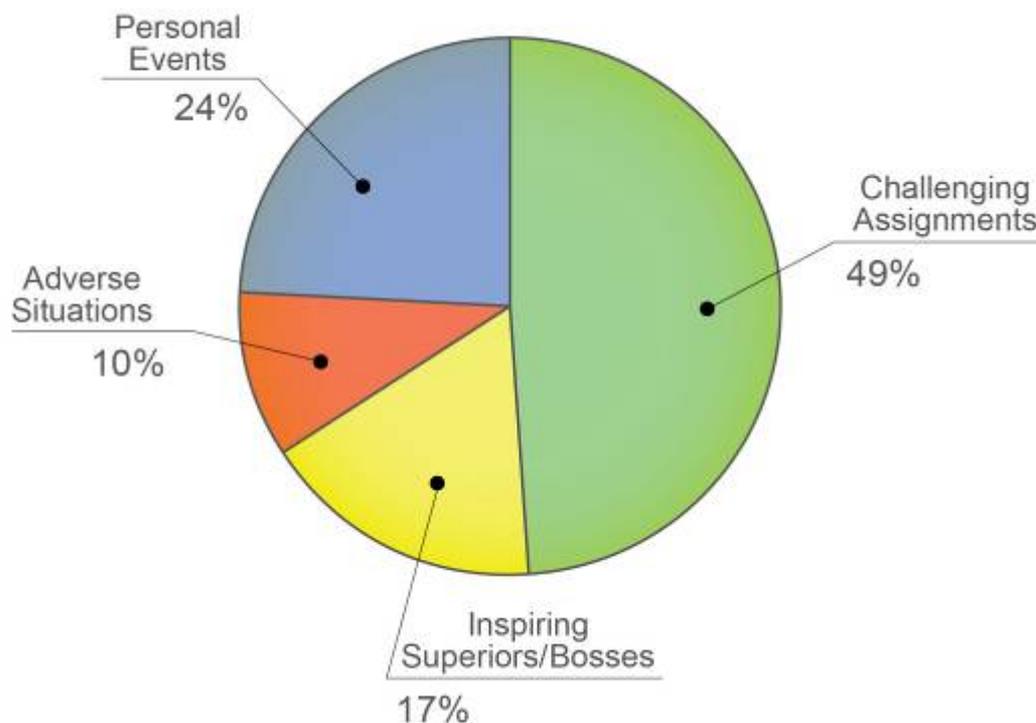


Table 4
The Variety of Experiences of Indian Senior Executives

CHALLENGING ASSIGNMENTS	INSPIRING SUPERIOR/BOSSES	ADVERSE SITUATIONS	PERSONAL EVENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Initiative* • Fix-it / Turnaround* • International Assignment* • Lateral / Cross-functional Move* • Increase in Job Scope* • Managing Organisational Change • Negotiation • Supervisory Responsibility • Cross-organisational collaboration • Rural Assignment • M&A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Role Model/Superior* • Boss Who Coaches* • Catalyst Boss* • Negative Role Model/Superior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mistakes* • Dealing with Labor /Trade unions • Business Crisis • Experience of Ethical Violation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Job Experience* • Coursework & Training* • Early Life Experience • Personal Experience • Role Models (non-work) • Cross-organisational Move • Working for a Non-Indian MNC

* Top 11 Events

Table 5
Descriptions of Top 11 Events

Events, Percent of Interviewee Citations, & Cluster		Event Descriptions
New initiative (37%)	CA	An opportunity to: start a unit, plant, or business from scratch; develop a new product or service; introduce new technology; or expand markets in a new region of the country or another country.
Fix it/turnaround (31%)	CA	Address poor business performance by turning around a failing business (low sales, negative growth). The outcome is that rather than incurring losses or barely breaking even, the business becomes profitable. Challenges that significantly impact productivity include: Resistant attitudes; people and morale issues; lack of systems and processes; and malfunctioning operational processes. A fix it /turnaround event can lead to a positive or seemingly negative outcome, such as the closing of a branch.
Early job experience (25%)	PE	Initial exposure to professional jobs and organisations. Examples include job interviews, early job experiences (first job, graduate trainee, or direct sales position), re-location to another region of the country to take up a job and forge new relationships. Assignment does not include supervisory or managerial responsibilities.
Positive role model/superior (24%)	IS/B	An immediate boss or superior several levels above (such as the founder of the company or the CEO or MD) makes a significant impact that lasts over time. The impact occurs in different ways. For example, the manager may observe the boss or superior when working alongside, or hear and read stories that have become myths. Managers are inspired by their role models and usually try to learn from and emulate them, incorporating their behaviors into their own style of leading and managing. Sometimes, they acknowledge that their role model has negative characteristics too.
International assignment (24%)	CA	One of two scenarios occurs: the executive takes up an assignment and is re-located outside India; or she or he takes over as functional head and focuses on international operations while remaining in India. Occasionally, international assignments involve meeting business objectives under hazardous and even life-threatening situations such as insurgencies or riots.

Lateral/cross-functional move (18%)	CA	New responsibilities, usually in a different function, are involved, but the manager's level stays the same. Examples: From client facing roles in marketing and sales to internal roles in operations; from staff to line function or vice-versa; from regional office to corporate headquarters; and from an administrative role to a shop role. Other examples include job rotation and transfers from an urban to semi-urban location. In some cases, managers have cited multiple job transitions between assignments, functions and organisations, or participation on a cross-functional project teams as sources of learning.
Increase in job scope (18%)	CA	The manager takes on significantly greater responsibilities and duties due to successful performance and promotion, and sometimes due to their own initiative to grow the business. This happens early or mid-career as part of normal career progression and usually involves greater visibility. In India, the trigger is often the rapid growth and internationalization of the organisation
Mistakes (18%)	AS	Many kinds of mistakes can be committed by oneself or others in the organisation. Mistakes can be strategic business errors affecting the organisation or incidents of managerial or personal failure. Examples include: Strategic or operational errors with serious consequences; failures to follow-up adequately; errors made in dealing with people (such as failing to treat others with fairness and respect); and errors of judgment, such as selecting an unsuitable career path.
Boss who coaches (17%)	IS/B	This boss is not only a role-model but actively supports the personal and career development of the manager. Interactions involve direct advice, such as how to dress, relate to clients, or make a presentation.
Catalyst boss (14%)	IS/B	This boss impacts young, early career managers. The young manager has an experience of being singled out or spotted by a boss or superior to use his or her own judgment and handle a situation independently or by leading a team. He or she is granted the autonomy and support to handle a complex or difficult assignment. The event is empowerment combined with the relationship with the boss.
Coursework & training (14%)	PE	By taking up an opportunity created by themselves or their organisation, managers participate in formal managerial development programs, academic programs, or international study tours. Examples include: Experiential programs (such as outward bound), spiritual training, action learning projects undertaken as part of formal development, and residential executive education programs in one's own or another country. Managers are able to obtain information, knowledge and experiences not available in their day-to-day jobs that help them to re-direct or advance their career.

■ KEY LESSONS IN INDIA

Key lessons represent a shift in attitudes, values, knowledge, behavior or skill level. Lessons are generated from events. From our analysis of the 575 lessons described in-depth, we identified 29 lessons categories. These were sorted into four clusters of which 35% are related to self, 30% to other people, 30% to running the business, and 5% to the meaning of leadership (see Figure 6). In this section, we describe the clusters, identify all lessons learned, and provide descriptions for the 11 lessons noted by at least 20% of interviewees (see Tables 7 and 8).

The four clusters and most frequently cited 11 lessons are as follows.

- **Leading Self** (S) lessons relate to the inner world of leaders and effective ways to manage themselves—their thoughts, emotions, actions, and attitudes over time. These lessons include: Confidence; self-awareness; understanding and committing to life goals; and integrity. These are the essentials of self-management.
- **Leading Others** (O) lessons relate to the world of people and involve interpersonal and social skills that equip leaders to connect with people. These lessons include: Managing and motivating subordinates; developing subordinates; and team management. These are the essentials of relationship management.
- **Leading the Business** (B) lessons relate to the world of running a business and facilitating the accomplishment of work in organisations. These lessons include: Execution and operational savvy; innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship; functional knowledge; and gathering information, knowledge, and insight. These are the essentials of managing a unit, department, or the organisation.
- **Meaning of Leadership** (L) lessons are distilled from years of experience and represent personal success formulae about how to lead self, others, and the business. A related insight is that that being a leader is more than having expertise or holding a position or title.

Figure 6
Distribution of Lessons Learned by Indian Executives
(N = 575 Lessons)

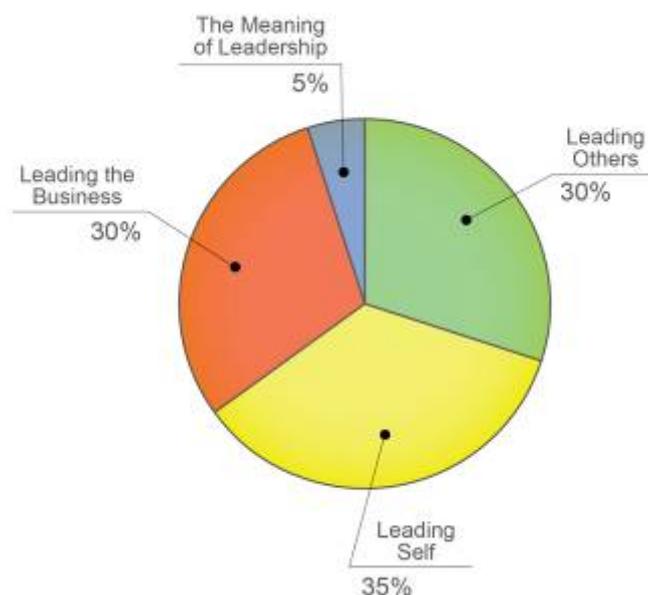


Table 7
The Variety of Lessons Learned by Indian Senior Executives

THE MEANING OF LEADERSHIP		
LEADING SELF	LEADING OTHERS	LEADING THE BUSINESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fix Confidence* • Self-Awareness* • Understanding & Committing to Life Goals* • Integrity* • Becoming Humane • Dealing with Setbacks • Developing Flexibility & Adaptability • Seeing Things From a New Perspective • Dealing with Ambiguity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing and Motivating Subordinates* • Developing Subordinates* • Team Management* • Cultural Savvy • Building Relationships with Peers and Seniors • Building Credibility • Communication & Feedback • Gaining Influence • Managing Multiple Stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execution & Operating Savvy* • Innovation, Creativity & Entrepreneurship* • Functional Knowledge* • Gathering Information, Knowledge & Insights* • Decision-making & Problem-solving • Acquiring a Broad Organizational View & Strategic Insight • Customer Orientation • Handling Organizational & Cultural Change

*** Top 11 Lessons**

We underscore that 65% of all lessons learned are not about leading the business, but about leading others and leading self. Based on analysis of the interview data, we suggest that self, other, and business lessons be equally emphasized – this is how maximum learning can be extracted from on-the-job experiences. In our view, tools and processes will need to be developed – for bosses, coaches, and HR managers - to make this kind of extraction possible.

Table 8
Descriptions of Top 11 Lessons

Lessons, Percent of Interviewee Citations, & Cluster		Lesson Descriptions
Confidence (46%)	S	Confidence is belief in oneself, and a self-reliant or “can do” attitude. Confidence is boosted by surviving stress, adversity and pressure, solving problems, speaking up in the presence of bosses, or being singled out for recognition by a promotion, appointment, or other honor.
Managing & motivating subordinates (37%)	O	Managing and motivating subordinates involves getting the best from subordinates and gaining their buy-in. There are many ways to achieve this, including empowering subordinates, offering them freedom to experiment, trusting their competence, providing a sense of purpose, knowing their aspirations, and working with their strengths and limitations.
Self-awareness (31%)	S	Self-awareness is knowledge about one’s abilities, limitations and needs. It includes knowledge about one’s competencies, the contributions one is capable of making, and reflective insights about changes in outlook, perspective or behaviors that have occurred as a result of experiences.
Understanding & committing to life goals (31%)	S	Insights about values that can lead to success in life are identified and become part of the manager’s self-definition. These values – such as the importance of persistence, perseverance, hard work, optimism, and balance between material and spiritual pursuits – are ones that the manager uses to guide his or her life.
Execution and operating savvy (31%)	B	Execution and operating savvy are tactical lessons learned for getting the job done and meeting expected performance levels. Examples include devising practical solutions, setting achievable milestones, breaking a complex job into its component parts, paying attention to details (such as crossing your t’s and dotting your i’s on a legal document), executing within the limits of tight resources, financial management, cross-checking and following up on operations, adopting principles of organizing and quality management, anticipating and fixing operational issues related to appropriate use of technology, proactive planning, and persevering to meet job objectives.

Innovation, creativity & entrepreneurship (28%)	B	Innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship places value on unconventional approaches, experimentation and risk-taking, and entrepreneurship and creativity to achieve business success. The latitude to make mistakes, is comfortable with making mistakes, and to recover from mistakes is encouraged. Examples are: Learning about connecting what seems unrelated, doing business in new ways, looking at opportunities, and not accepting resource constraints as a limit to what can be achieved.
Developing subordinates (25%)	O	Developing subordinates typically involves the manager pro-actively choosing to help subordinates to learn and grow. Often, a philosophy and approach to working with subordinates is articulated. Subordinates are helped to develop confidence, acquire new skills, be prepared to take on more responsibilities, and gain knowledge about their organisation, industry and business environment. Related practices are: timely feedback, time in conversation, providing challenging opportunities, delegating jobs that subordinates may be able to do efficiently and effectively, and shining the spotlight and genuinely taking joy in subordinates' achievements.
Functional knowledge (25%)	B	Functional knowledge concerns specific aspects of the business, for example, finance, e-business, operations, pricing, and so forth. Subject matter knowledge -- such as about accounting, finance, or HR -- and technical knowledge -- such as about textile weaving or blast furnaces -- is included.
Gathering information, knowledge, and insights (24%)	B	Knowledge, information, and insights are gained through informal channels, within and outside the organisation. Conversations with a variety of people are valued -- for example with young people, subordinates, experts, and industry leaders. Tactics such as reading, reflecting, writing notes, seeking guidance, and having learning partners are practiced. A related and deeper realization is that managers can be effective without comprehensive technical knowledge or functional experience. Managers reporting this lesson seem to be guided by curiosity and a desire to know.
Team management (22%)	O	Team management includes insights about how an effective and high-performing team can be developed and being able to do so. Related practices are: selecting team members carefully, trusting individual competence, protecting the team from the larger organisational environment, creating a unity of purpose/intention, and enjoying and valuing team achievements. An important aspect of team management is the insight to not be prescriptive and let the team discover itself. Thus team members learn to support each other through ups and downs to maintain morale.
Integrity (21%)	S	Integrity involves courage and honesty even if there may be a negative consequence. Examples include: being forthright in expressing ignorance, honest in tough times, not politicking, and pursuing a code of conduct. Integrity emerges in interactions with others and in public settings and is a conscious choice to speak or act in accordance with espoused values and express personal perspectives and beliefs.

■ THE EVENT-LESSON LINK

For business organisations in India to continue to achieve global impact in the future, their talent pools must become broad and deep today. Two important steps can be taken; both are based on synchronizing events and lessons (see Tables 9 and 10).

The first step is simply to pay attention to which events, or on-the-job experiences, are the most developmental (see Table 9). Senior executives and managers can then provide such experiences more intentionally to their early and mid-career managers. The second step is to pay attention to which lessons are the most relevant (see Table 10). This will vary, based on the needs of individual managers. Superiors and bosses can then match the subordinate's developmental needs with appropriately challenging assignments and inspiring support.

Clearly, business organisations can benefit from investing systematically in the development of future leadership. We suggest that a systematic approach will yield higher dividends than ad hoc selection of managers, incomplete assessment of their developmental needs, and only opportunistic provision for learning and growth. To make this possible, these research findings can be used as a starting point. Lessons can be matched with events that teach that lesson. Illustrative examples follow:

- **Confidence (S)**. Confidence emerged as by far the most frequently cited lesson learned, noted by almost half of all interviewees. Young managers who need to become more confident can benefit from leading a new initiative or shadowing a senior executive on a fix-it / turn-around assignment.
- **Managing and motivating subordinates (O)**. A striking finding of this study is that the perspectives and skills needed for managing and motivating subordinates are best learned from positive role models and bosses who are coaches. While this finding makes intuitive sense, this research validation gives urgency to helping bosses become positive role models. The cascading impact of bosses who excel at managing and motivating subordinates, and can teach others to do so, has enormous implications for business productivity.
- **Execution and operating savvy (B)**. As recommended earlier, assigning a junior manager to shadow a senior executive on a fix-it / turn-around assignment not only builds confidence, but also teaches execution and operating savvy. And since mistakes are a source of this lesson, organisations that help managers to learn from mistakes will improve this ability.

An important caveat: This study is a launching point for understanding the event-lesson link; but the sample size permits us to connect events with lessons in an exploratory, not definitive way. Additional data is needed to undertake rigorous quantitative analysis.

So, we will not pretend that the rich experiences of work life, and the lessons therein, can be encapsulated in the tables that follow. For example, we know that confidence is boosted by many different experiences, not just by launching a new initiative or participating in a fix-it / turnaround assignment. However, we do suggest that the approach we have adopted -- of linking events and lessons learned -- can help set the direction for more intentional and fruitful leadership development.

Table 9
Linking Events and Lessons:
Lessons Learned from Top 11 Events

Events	Strong Link	Moderate Link
New initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence • Gaining influence • Innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship • Self-awareness • Functional expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering information, knowledge, and insights from various sources • Customer orientation
Fix it / Turnaround	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence • Execution & operational savvy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship • Self-awareness • Team management
Early job related experience		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity • Management & leadership
Positive role model**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing and motivating subordinates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming humane • Confidence • Decision-making & problem-solving • Developing subordinates • Management & leadership
International assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-cultural savvy 	
Lateral / Cross-functional move	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional expertise • Managing multiple stakeholders 	
Increase in job scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing & motivating subordinates
Mistakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execution & operational savvy 	
Boss as coach**	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing and motivating subordinates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming humane • Confidence • Decision-making & problem-solving • Developing subordinates • Management & leadership
Catalyst boss		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence
Coursework & training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand individuals and individual differences

** Further analysis is needed to more accurately differentiate between lessons learned from **Positive role model** and **Boss as coach**.

Table 10
Linking Lessons and Events:
Events from which Top 11 Lessons are Learned

Lessons	Strong Link	Moderate Link
Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New initiative • Fix-it / Turnaround • Early life experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive role model/superior • Catalyst boss • Personal experience
Managing & motivating subordinates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive role model/superior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in job scope
Self-awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fix-it / Turnaround • Early life experience
Understanding and committing to life goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early life experience 	
Execution and operating savvy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fix-it / Turnaround 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mistakes
Innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fix-it / Turnaround
Developing subordinates		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive role model/superior
Functional expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New initiative • Lateral / Cross-functional move • Increase in job scope 	
Gathering information, knowledge, and insights from various sources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New initiative
Team management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fix-it / Turnaround
Integrity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early job experience

■ IMPLICATIONS: ACCELERATING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Alvin Toffler (2006), the renowned futurist, reminds us:

As we advance into the terra incognita of tomorrow, it is better to have a general and incomplete map, subject to revision and correction, than to have no map at all.

Our intent has been to share critically important knowledge – the best we currently know -- about how leadership can be developed in Indian companies that are on a high-growth trajectory. The advantages we expect are that:

- Organisational leaders will understand what lessons are most important for their subordinates to learn in order to become effective executives and leaders; and how to provide these lessons.
- Subordinates who aspire to become senior leaders will be better equipped to develop a plan for progressing themselves.
- HR executives (from both domestic and foreign organisations) who are interested in forming an India-based leadership development strategy will learn how to adjust their HRD approach to the Indian context.
- Global managers, originating in countries outside India and with a stake in the Indian business context, will learn how to work with their Indian counterparts.

In summary, we have aimed to simplify, but not be simplistic about, the complex phenomenon of executive learning, growth and development. The specific insights in this report are offered as a basis for devising practical approaches to leadership development.

Knowledge is clearly not enough. This research raises several critical questions concerning how leadership development is implemented:

- How can on-the-job experiences be leveraged and emphasized more than coursework and training?
- Can challenging assignments be more intentionally allocated to create developmental opportunities for managers identified for leadership roles?
- What processes are needed to customize assignments to meet the developmental needs of high potential managers?
- How significantly can leadership development be impacted by improving bosses' knowledge and ability to be positive role models, coaches and catalysts?

We invite you to join with us in research and practice to tackle one of the most compelling issues of our time: Developing competent leadership.

■ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) and the Tata Management Training Center (TMTc) gratefully acknowledge the eight participating companies in India, their HR Directors, and the 105 senior executives who consented to give up to 1 ½ hours of time to share their personal histories and lessons learned. They have made this research and its findings memorable, and contributed to new knowledge of business leadership in India.

Team members and others who provided resources and moral support are as follows.

Center for Creative Leadership	Tata Management Training Center
<p>Sponsors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dave Altman • Michael Jenkins 	<p>Sponsors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satish Pradhan • Radhakrishnan Nair • Commodore Dilip Mohapatra
<p>Research Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meena Wilson (Principal Investigator) • Jeff Yip • Yi Zhang • Ruohong (Rola) Wei • Anand Chandrasekar • Ellen Van Velsor (Sr. Consultant) 	<p>Research Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abinash Panda • Sangeeta Mathur • Chitra Duvedi (Project Manager)
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Meena Surie Wilson, Ph.D. is currently Research Co-Director, Asia Pacific Leadership, for the Center for Creative Leadership®-Asia. In this role, she is responsible for starting up a sustainable, highly regarded Research, Innovation and Product Development unit to advance knowledge about leadership and leadership development in the Asian region. Her responsibilities include the role of Principal Investigator for the *Lessons of Experience – Asia* research studies being conducted in India, Singapore and China. Meena is also on the team of the Center’s Evaluation Center in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Previously, as Interim Managing Director, CCL-Asia, and Director, Asia-Pacific Relations, Meena was on special assignment in Singapore to heighten CCL® presence in the region. She completed the launch of the CCL-Asia office in Singapore in July 2003. While working on the Center’s Singapore initiative, she also completed collaborative research with the Singapore Economic Development Board, studying their leadership and leadership development practices.

Meena joined the Center for Creative Leadership® in 1992 as a Research Associate. Her research has focused on cross-cultural managerial effectiveness and intercultural value differences. A published author, her credits include book chapters, reports, and conference and workshop presentations. In addition, Meena facilitates assessment, feedback, and coaching modules in CCL programs.

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■ ABOUT THE TATA MANAGEMENT TRAINING CENTER

The Tata Management Training Centre (TMTc), Pune, was established under the aegis of the JRD Tata, Chairman, Tata Group. It began operations on January 6, 1966 with the objective to function as an educational institution facilitating the development of professional leaders contributing towards the economic development of the country. The Centre is today renowned as one of the foremost management training facilities in the country with prestigious national and international affiliations.

TMTc is committed to knowledge sharing, personality development, training corporate leaders and developing managers and administrators for not only business but other spheres of management as well. In time, TMTc has contributed to corporate, public and national growth through its planned emphasis on all-round human resource development.

Vision statement

Our vision is to become a catalyst of learning for organisational change

Our mission

To anticipate the needs of organisations and provide world-class managerial inputs and learning orientation

Our values

- Customer driven quality
- Excellence
- Continuous improvement
- Purpose

In keeping with the vision of the Tata Group, TMTc offers training solutions and services in a knowledge world. Its 'purpose statement' is to focus on leadership development within the Tata group in particular and the Indian industry in general.

■ ABOUT THE CENTER FOR CREATIVE LEADERSHIP

For nearly 40 years, the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL[®]) has been helping people become more effective leaders. Through our esteemed faculty of behavioural scientists, researchers and coaches, we offer unparalleled expertise in solving the leadership challenges faced by individuals and organisations around the world. We believe leaders are made, not born, and that they can adapt and change.

Founded in 1970 as a non-profit, educational institution, CCL helps clients worldwide cultivate creative leadership - the capacity to achieve more than imagined by thinking and acting beyond boundaries - through an array of programmes, products and other services.

Each year more than 20,000 managers and executives, educators, government administrators, community and volunteer leaders around the world attend our programmes. Our publications, products and research initiatives reach a global audience as well. The Center employs more than 500 faculty members and staff at its Greensboro, NC headquarters and on campuses in Colorado Springs, CO, San Diego, CA, Brussels, Belgium, and Singapore.

May 14th 2008 - News Release

The Center for Creative Leadership Ranked in Top 10 in *Financial Times* Executive Education Survey for Fourth Consecutive Year - Greensboro, N.C.

The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL[®]) ranked No. 8 overall in the 2008 *Financial Times* worldwide survey of executive education released today. CCL is the only institution in the survey focused exclusively on leadership education and research, placing it in the company of many of the world's elite business schools.



"We're proud to be ranked so highly among such prestigious institutions once again," said CCL President John Ryan. "At CCL, creating impact for clients is our top priority. These new rankings show our work consistently makes a difference for leaders and organizations."

The *Financial Times* executive education rankings were based on surveys of organisations and individuals from around the world who rated leading executive education providers for quality and impact. The full report is posted in the Executive Education section of FT.com.