

ASTD 2008 International Conference & Exposition**Session W215 – Building Resilient Leadership:
A Model of Vendor and Client Collaboration****Dean M. Becker**

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The logo for Adaptiv, featuring the word "Adaptiv" in a red, serif font with a red checkmark-like symbol above the 'i'.The Verizon logo, consisting of a red checkmark symbol above the word "verizon" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font.**Session Learning Objectives:**

- 1. Develop a strategy of collaboration between client and vendor to affect widespread organizational change.**
- 2. Develop and apply the model outlined in the session to suit your own organizational needs.**
- 3. Establish a collaborative approach between client and vendor to measure the effectiveness of an organizational change initiative.**

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Overview

In this session you will learn of the ups and downs of implementing an organization-wide, leadership development strategy in a 'Fortune 20' company. The session is co-facilitated by a senior executive at Verizon Telecom and the President and CEO of a vendor company recruited to measure and train in resilience.

As we will see, the process is collaborative and involves 5 steps:

- 1. Identify the competency gap**
What is the client need? What obstacles are there to productivity and performance?
- 2. Agree on the specific need(s)**
Client and vendor must ensure that they are speaking the same language – that each has a clear read on the needs of the client.
- 3. Locate the need within the organization**
Vendor must assist the client in locating which parts of the organization are in most need to maximize value.
- 4. Collaboratively develop an intervention to address the need**
Vendor and client together shape an intervention that may involve organizational development, training, and coaching.
- 5. Evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention**
Vendor must help the client identify precisely what productivity and performance measures they expect to improve through the intervention, and develop valid and reliable ways of measuring the impact of the intervention.

Caveat: This is not a strictly linear process. There are feedback loops as specified in the job aid on the final page of this handout.

About this Handout

This handout is meant to be used as a guide for you to develop collaborative training initiatives in your organization. It is not intended to be a copy of the PowerPoint slides.

The key slides from the presentation are available for download at the Adaptive website:

www.adaptivlearning.com/ice08

Step #1 Identify the competency gap

- Significant change in the industry, the organization (Verizon)
- Bell Atlantic & GTE merge, June 30, 2000 – one of largest in U.S. history
- 2004 buyout package – lost 15% of headcount
- 2005 acquisition of MCI – became largest telecom in U.S.
- Unprecedented new business model – from traditional phone company to Internet and TV provider through new technology (FiOS)
- Enormous flux and change in the company
- Identified **Resilience** as new core competency

Exercise: Identify one area of need in your organization or in a client company.

Step #2 Client and Vendor agree on the need

- What does 'resilience' mean to the client?
- As client circulates an RFP, what does 'resilience' mean to prospective vendors?
- Need to generate specific *operational definition* of resilience that client and vendor agree on
- Need to ensure that definition includes specific workplace competencies, behaviors, in the idiom of the client's corporate culture

Exercise: Generate a very specific definition of that competency/need. Incorporate concrete behaviors and the 'language' of the corporate culture.

Step #3 Client and Vendor locate the need

- Vendor and client together choose or design an instrument to measure the extent of the need or competency gap
- Onus is on the vendor to ensure the questionnaire/interview is valid and reliable
- The Resilience Factor Inventory (RFI) measures the 7 ingredients of Resilience as agreed upon by Verizon and Adaptiv:
 - ◆ Composure
 - ◆ Self Control
 - ◆ Problem Solving
 - ◆ Mastery
 - ◆ Optimism
 - ◆ Empathy
 - ◆ Audacity
- RFI has good validity and reliability
- RFI had good 'organizational fit' in language, and mode of delivery (online).

Exercise: Identify two or more instruments that claim to measure the competency in question. Evaluate them on:

- ◆ The language of the instrument and its 'language fit' with the client organization
- ◆ The behaviors evaluated and their fit with the client's definition of the competency
- ◆ Validity
- ◆ Reliability

Step #4 Collaboratively develop an intervention to address the need

- Vendor & client must collaboratively, honestly determine best intervention strategy
- What level in the organization is best served? What kind of intervention matches the need? OD? Training? Coaching?
- What are the strengths of the vendor? (OD? Training? Coaching?)
- What internal resources are available to the client organization (HR)?
- What other vendor services may be required?
- How can the client best facilitate communication between different vendors to minimize redundancy and ensure complete coverage?

Exercise: Apply the questions above to the need/competency you have located and measured.

Step #5 Evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention

- Onus on vendor to demonstrate effectiveness
- But only the client can collect 'sensitive' data
- Need to develop collaborative effort
- Need to agree on 'dependent measure' – what 'needles' does the client want to move? What 'needles' does the vendor believe can move?
- How can the client ensure no 'sleight of hand'?
- How can the vendor best communicate complex statistical analyses?
- For the client, what constitutes real evidence of the effectiveness of the intervention?
- For the client, how much ROI is enough?

Exercise: Map out your answers to the Step #5 questions:

About the presenters

Suri Surinder is a senior vice president and general manager with Verizon Telecom. Previously, Surinder was vice president – Broadband Operations, with national responsibility for 40+ domestic and international broadband operations support centers, including the Fiber Solutions Centers, DSL provisioning and maintenance centers, and technical support centers for DSL and Fast Packet.

Since joining the company in June of 1992, he has served in positions of increasing responsibility in field operations, customer care, marketing, network planning, strategic planning, finance, business development, process re-engineering, senior management support, and sales support in the local, long distance, international, and payphone business units at Verizon.

Prior to beginning his career with Verizon, Surinder taught at Baruch College in New York, provided strategic planning at Pfizer, and was president of his own consulting firm, offering systems and statistical consulting services to large and medium sized companies in banking, city government, energy, transportation, non-profit, and pharmaceuticals, like Chemical Bank, Pfizer, Con Edison, and the Port Authority of NY & NJ.

Surinder earned a B.S. in civil engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, an M.S. in structural engineering from Rice University, an M.B.A. in marketing from The City University of New York and a D.B.A. in marketing from Concordia University.

Dean Becker is a business executive with an MBA, and a BA in Psychology. He managed companies in the human resources and healthcare arenas prior to assuming leadership of Adaptiv Learning Systems.

He began his career with IBM's mainframe computer division. His top sales performance quickly led to his being named to IBM's Executive Resource Program, a select internal group of high-potential employees earmarked for management advancement. During the PC revolution in the computer industry, Becker shifted his career into search and recruitment for the information technology industry. After joining Source Services Corporation in its Source EDP division, he soon became the company's youngest managing director nationwide.

Becker's experience in both technology and human resources management led to an opportunity to create a new kind of service company for physicians that required his specific combination of skills. He became a founder of Adaptiv Learning Systems after negotiating the sale of this company.

Becker is co-developer of Adaptiv's resilience training programs and is a popular presenter and speaker on the topic of resilience.

Job Aid

