

Chapter 10

Graduate Lean Leadership Education: A Case Study of a Program

Shannon Flumerfelt

Oakland University, USA

Calandra Green

Oakland University, USA

ABSTRACT

A midwestern university in the USA implemented a Lean Leadership Graduate Certification Program in the 2018-2019 academic year for current and emerging leaders seeking to extend, enrich, or establish leadership knowledge, skills, abilities in the workplace. The purpose of this chapter is to share the results of an evaluation on the effectiveness of this Lean Leadership Graduate Certificate Program. The results from this case study on the Lean Leadership Graduate Certification Program indicated a need to market to a larger group of emerging leaders. Leadership development findings suggest the need to further advance knowledge development in Lean students and consideration for program goals that include strategies having a significant impact on Lean student's emotional well-being in meeting leadership challenges. A continuous need to reinforce Lean Leadership competencies as a core dimension of the program resulted in the largest impact of the program with the Lean Leadership students.

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2018, an American midwestern university introduced a unique model of leadership development called the Lean Leadership Graduate Programs, offered as a dual option transdisciplinary graduate program. One program option, the Lean Leadership Graduate Certificate, was designed for practicing or emerging leaders from any sector or any workplace who desire to extend, enrich or establish leadership knowledge, skills and abilities through mastery of Lean tenets, tools and competencies. The second program option, the Lean Leadership Cognate for the Ed.D. in Leadership or Ph.D. in Educational

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-8816-1.ch010

Leadership, offered an additional semester of study for those with master's degrees pursuing doctoral study. Both offerings intended to enable students to identify strengths and weaknesses as leaders and provide clear pathways for their future roles.

A series of two employer studies were conducted as the program was designed, developed, improved and adopted (Flumerfelt, Alves, Leao & Wade, 2016). For those two studies a pre- and post-design assessment was delivered to 37 American employers using Lean. The program was examined for workplace relevance in program design and delivery, student outcomes and organizational impacts. Determining the effectiveness, impact and outcomes of the Lean Leadership Graduate Certificate were the focus areas of this case study. Employers did endorse the final program design and feedback was positive as to the need for transdisciplinary Lean Leadership graduate programming, the program design and delivery, the content and competencies masteries included in student outcomes and anticipated organizational outcomes.

This chapter is focused on student outcomes of the program from its first year of deployment. To complete the study, current leaders across different organizations (finance, healthcare, higher education, and manufacturing) who were currently enrolled in the first Lean Leadership Certification course were surveyed. The survey was conducted to determine motivation for enrollment, an assessment of leadership competencies before and after the course completion, and a query of the most value-added components of the program. This case study was designed to provide insight into the question as to whether this unique type of lean training added value to the profession of leadership. This chapter explores lean theories, philosophies, and tools and examines the results of the program's case study as a qualitative measure of program effectiveness for student outcomes.

THE CASE FOR LEAN LEADERSHIP

Many leaders today share stories of silent suffering in their roles as leaders (Dahl, 2020). Job titles are matched with unrelenting deliverables to meet hierarchical needs. The constant pressures of process improvement, evolving technological advances, and overall organization change, creates an uneasiness for leaders who are trying to maintain confidence in their own individual abilities. When leaders have overwhelming feelings of underdevelopment, they may seek opportunities outside of the organization. Some have chosen to pursue advanced degrees aimed at improving their leadership skills. However, leaders are also seeking programs to help inform them of a better understanding of today's leadership challenges. Lean Leadership has become a favorable option for many who struggle with balancing rapid change in unsteady organizational climates.

The challenge of leadership today is viewed as a multifaceted approach to simultaneously working to improve finance, growth, customer service, quality, and technology (Longenecker & Yonker, 2013). Further, organizations are experiencing tumultuous change at unprecedented levels, due to societal change, Industry 4.0, and tough competition, meaning that complexity is increasing dramatically (Flumerfelt, Schwartz, Mavris & Briceno, 2019). Research also makes it clear that without effective leadership practices, at all levels of an enterprise, performance improvement and achieving better results will be difficult or even nonexistent (Longenecker et al., 2009). Authors Higgs and Rowland (2005) suggested that the inability of organizations to compete with economies of scale results in a condition that "runs the risk of being put out of business" (p. 159). Leadership sustainability requires a skill level beyond what currently exists to compete in today's market.

21 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:
www.igi-global.com/chapter/graduate-lean-leadership-education/293566

Related Content

Developing Engineering Students' Communication and Information Retrieval Skills Utilizing Capstone Projects

Aaron S. Blicblau and Jamal Naser (2015). *International Journal of Quality Assurance in Engineering and Technology Education* (pp. 1-20).

www.irma-international.org/article/developing-engineering-students-communication-and-information-retrieval-skills-utilizing-capstone-projects/147414

United States Participation in the European Project Semester: An Exceptionally Successful Endeavor

Duane L. Abata (2022). *Handbook of Research on Improving Engineering Education With the European Project Semester* (pp. 23-42).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/united-states-participation-in-the-european-project-semester/300241

The Application of Flipped Classroom in Teaching University Students: A Case Study From Vietnam

Tran Van Hung, Mohan Yellishetty, Ngo Tu Thanh, Arun Patil and Le Thanh Huy (2017). *International Journal of Quality Assurance in Engineering and Technology Education* (pp. 40-52).

www.irma-international.org/article/the-application-of-flipped-classroom-in-teaching-university-students/190395

Science Education with and through ICT: Curriculum Design and Questioning to Promote Active Learning

Francislê Neri de Souza (2016). *Handbook of Research on Applied E-Learning in Engineering and Architecture Education* (pp. 1-14).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/science-education-with-and-through-ict/142741

Building Community Resilience Through Environmental Education: A Local Response to Climate Change

Mphemelang Joseph Ketlhoilwe (2019). *Building Sustainability Through Environmental Education* (pp. 1-21).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/building-community-resilience-through-environmental-education/219049