



Symantec.

Symantec Leaders Show “Extraordinary” Results

Zenger Folkman's Extraordinary Leader Program exceeds expectations with Symantec's Top Talent: First-line managers improve in all 16 competencies

THE PROBLEM

Symantec™ is a global leader in providing security, storage and systems management solutions to help our customers – from consumers and small businesses to the largest global organizations – secure and manage their information and identities independent of device. Symantec does this by bringing together leading software and cloud solutions that work seamlessly across multiple platforms, giving customers the freedom to use the devices of their choice and to access, store and transmit information anytime, anywhere. As a result, Symantec attracts top talent from around the world, including highly effective leaders who make profound differences in their businesses. However, like in most enterprises, “there are good leaders and there are great leaders—and Symantec makes momentous efforts to help both further develop their strengths as they progress within the organization,” said Sandy Hunter, Senior Director, Leadership & Employee Development, Symantec. “We know that deploying strong leadership practices from top to bottom is going to drive better business results.”

Once leaders have achieved a certain level of success, it can be tempting to continue status quo, but Symantec recognized the opportunity for them to accomplish still more: “What got them to where they are may not be sufficient to keep them successful over time, especially in a very dynamic environment,” Hunter said. “Our success depends on our ability to develop, motivate, and retain high-potential employees at every level of the company, and prepare them to take on additional responsibility as the organization grows.”

To help leaders further develop their skill sets on a daily basis, Symantec offered several unique high-potential/leadership programs. However, these programs (eight in total) were unaligned with different philosophies, selection criteria, methods, standards, and measurements. As a result, significant resources were spent with uneven access and results throughout the company.

To increase its ability to identify, differentiate, and develop key talent across the entire organization, while saving limited resources, Symantec in 2010 launched “Top Talent.” About 15 percent of Symantec’s full-time employees are recognized as Top Talent based on the combined performance and potential ratings they receive during their annual review. All employees have the opportunity to qualify and participate each year.

Top Talent consists of three tracks based on the unique challenges and requirements at each level in the organization:

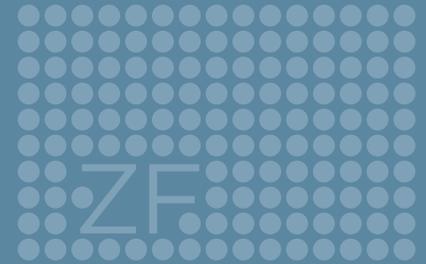
- Individual Contributors
- Managers/Senior Managers
- Directors/Senior Directors

According to Bettina Koblick, Chief HR Officer at Symantec, “By cultivating and deploying our employees’ leadership strengths, we can drive superior performance amidst accelerating growth and competitiveness in the IT marketplace. To not accelerate their development and feed this leadership pipeline would have been a shame.”

THE SOLUTION

In 2005, several of Symantec’s training programs, specifically focused on director-

Extraordinary Leader™ Case Study



The Problem

- Driving results through effective leadership required ongoing personal skill development for Symantec’s Top Talent.

The Solution

- Symantec implemented Zenger Folkman's *Extraordinary Leader* and *Inspiring Leader* solutions into its Top Talent program to help its high-potential first-line managers and senior managers leverage their strengths and better motivate and inspire direct reports and peers.

The Results

- The results were astounding.
- Participants in Symantec's Top Talent program showed improvement in every one of the 16 differentiating competencies.

ABOUT SYMANTEC

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and vice president-level leadership training, implemented a third-party leadership strength development program called *The Extraordinary Leader*. Based on the best-selling book by John “Jack” Zenger and Joseph Folkman, *The Extraordinary Leader* draws on data from more than 200,000 individuals who rated more than 25,000 leaders in a wide range of companies and industries. Through this research, the authors proved that the effectiveness of an organization’s leaders has a direct impact on employee commitment, customer satisfaction, innovation and ultimately profitability.

The Extraordinary Leader program helps managers become better leaders by:

- applying a cross-training approach to leadership strength development
- utilizing 360-degree feedback to identify key strengths
- creating an action-oriented development plan that facilitates goal setting and follow through
- learning to apply leadership development in daily, on-the-job activities

Based on these features and the success demonstrated through the previous training, the company decided to use *The Extraordinary Leader* for the Top Talent program for high-potential first line managers and senior managers.

“One thing we heard from nearly every director or vice president who had ever participated in *The Extraordinary Leader* Workshop was that they wished they had taken the competency assessment much earlier in their careers,” Hunter said. “We could immediately see that it was going to bring great value to our leaders at nearly any level, so it made sense that it became the basis of Top Talent for our front-line managers.”

Symantec designed a global Top Talent curriculum providing consistent development across all businesses, functions, and regions. Each track offered stimulating activities using multiple learning strategies and technologies. *The Extraordinary Leader* 360-degree Assessment, identifying leadership

strengths and development needs, was included in the Manager/Senior Manager track to elevate the quality and results of the development experience. Zenger Folkman partnered with Symantec, certifying their own in-house facilitators to implement *The Extraordinary Leader*, again maximizing limited resources.

The initial Top Talent program comprised 455 first-line managers and senior managers. Each participant collected feedback from peers, managers, and direct reports on their perception of the managers’ capabilities in 16 researched leadership competencies, including *developing strategic perspective, collaboration and teamwork, technical/professional expertise, motivating and inspiring others, driving for results, and taking initiative*.

The Top Talent then received and debriefed the results in a two-day event. They explored the positive impact of improving their strengths, created a development roadmap, and networked with other Top Talent managers/senior managers.

Fortunately, the Top Talent program doesn’t stop when they leave the classroom (or webinar, for those that can’t attend in person). In addition to the development plan, Symantec also provides several interactive webinars and a monthly newsletter to help them recall and implement the topics discussed in the program.

“This sustainability is vital for two reasons: It helps build up the skills the leaders are learning and helps the program managers find out who the real top talent is over the years,” Hunter said. “The people who are really taking it seriously and are really trying to develop themselves as leaders become apparent over time.”

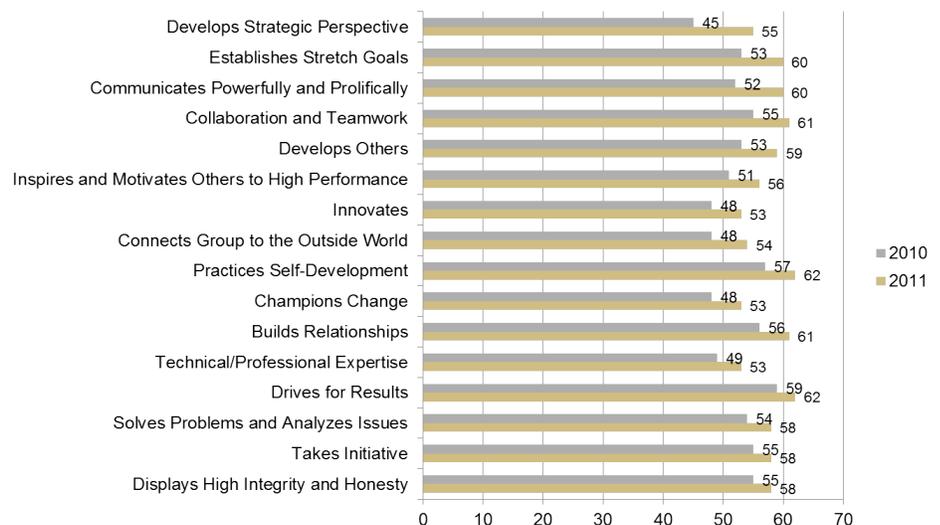
THE RESULTS

Based on the success of the initial Top Talent program, another cohort of leaders was identified and invited to participate in a subsequent Top Talent program. Eighty of the 400+ leaders from the first cohort joined the program and participated in *The Extraordinary Leader* Re-assessment. This provided Symantec and Zenger Folkman with the unique opportunity to measure their leadership growth and effectiveness over the preceding year. The results were incredibly positive. Symantec found improvement in each and every competency measured.

“We’re seeing a significant improvement in overall leadership effectiveness through the *Extraordinary Leader* implementation,” Hunter said. “Having our leaders improve in all 16 competencies is a great testament to the value of this program.”

The Top Talent agree. For example, Steve Matteucci, Senior Inside Sales Manager

Average Percentile Scores on 16 Differentiating Competencies
(Sorted from Largest Change)



of Cloud Solutions at Symantec, went through *The Extraordinary Leader*-based Top Talent program. Matteucci learned how his direct reports and peers perceived him, and as a result, was able to utilize that data to change his approach to be more genuine and motivating.

“Steve began participating in the Top Talent program about the same time his team began to experience significant challenges, including being assigned new territories and business subsets, and in many cases, entirely different customers,” said John Belle, Senior Director for Commercial and Small Business Channel sales, Symantec. “However, while other leaders were experiencing significant turnover, not one of Steve’s 11 direct reports quit, which to me is clear evidence that the changes that Steve made as a result of his experience with *The Extraordinary Leader* program were highly successful.”

Matteucci and other Top Talent learned how to better relate with their direct reports and peers. “Technical people often don’t feel charismatic, so the concept of connecting emotionally can be difficult,” Belle said. “This program showed them that there were different ways to connect with their colleagues and employees. If you leverage a strength a little differently and are flexible in your approach, you can motivate them in the way you need to, just not the way you thought you needed to.”

After the re-assessment in 2011, all of the Top Talent attendees participated in Zenger Folkman’s *Inspiring Leader* Workshop. This program was added to build the leadership skills they needed to increase employee engagement and retention, and inspire and motivate their teams to even greater success.

With help from these Zenger Folkman programs, Symantec achieved its goal

to create and implement a successful, consistent, cross-functional, corporate-wide high-potential program. According to Koblick, this program is already proving invaluable as Steve Bennett, appointed Chief Executive Officer in July 2012, builds upon the significant assets already in place to move the company forward.

“Our new CEO lives and breathes leadership development, decision making, and understanding high potential. This program is perfectly aligned with the vision he has for the company,” Koblick said. “The radical transformation he is requiring of Symantec in very short order could not happen if we hadn’t spent the past three years building talented leaders at every level. We now have leaders who are intensely focused on learning, teaching, and understanding which competencies are not only valuable, but are critical to their performance.”

The Extraordinary Leader approach focuses on the ability—in fact, the necessity—for individuals to hone their leadership competencies in key areas, and organizations to develop great leaders in these areas. It provides research-based strategies for strengthening leadership, both in individuals and in organizations, and delivers today’s most sensible and flexible leadership development program.