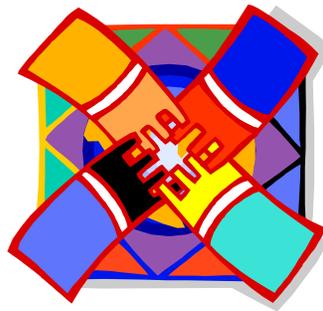


## **ACTION LEARNING SCENARIO #4**

Creating a Leadership-Centered Culture  
in Times of Doing “Less with Less”



*Champion:*  
*Barbara Wainman*

*Team Leader:*  
*Cheryl Miller*

*Coach:*  
*Cynthia Harris*

*Leadership 201*  
*July 11-15, 2005*

**Leadership. . . getting to the  of the matter**

## **Creating a Leadership-Centered Culture In Times of Doing “Less with Less”**

**Champion: Barbara Wainman**

### **The issue:**

Since 1999, the Leadership Program has been able to touch approximately 50 people a year through the Leadership 101 and 201 classes. During the last three years, an additional 240 people per year have gone through the Leadership Intensive (LI) classes around the country. The number of LI classes continues to decline each year and funding is uncertain each year. The LI classes have been funded by Human Resource Initiative (HRI) dollars.

### **The challenge:**

With decreasing budgets and the Director charging us to “Do Less with Less,” how do we continue to create a leadership-centered culture? How can all parts of the organization help to spread the leadership message? How can the Office of Employee Development (OED) help?

How do we follow up and follow through on the training from the L101, L201, and the Leadership Intensives? How can the graduates of leadership training reach out to others in their offices and within the organization to spread the leadership principles? How can grassroots efforts such as the Central Region Leadership Group (CRLG) and the Reston Leadership Group (RLG), as well as small groups around the country, help with this issue?

How can we use the tools that exist, such as the Leadership coin and the Excellence in Leadership award, more effectively? What other tools could we create and utilize to spread the leadership message?

How can we lead up, down, and across to continue to create a leadership-centered culture? How can we reach leaders at every level of the organization? What are the benefits to the mission of the USGS to continue to create a leadership-centered culture? How can we meet the goals of science excellence through leadership excellence?

We appreciate your time to look into these challenges and look forward to your findings and recommendations to continue to create a leadership-centered culture that will support science excellence within USGS.

### **Background:**

In the USGS Strategic Plan, we have a goal that “The USGS will have visionary leaders and innovative managers.” In response to that goal, the bureau established a USGS Leadership Program in 1999, with the initial target audience being GS 12/13’s across the bureau. The initial

step was then expanded to include GS 14/15's. The participants of the week-long class of Leadership 101 (L101) followed up with the Leadership 201 (L201) class about 1 ½ years later. Two L101 classes and two L201 classes have been held each year, touching over 300 USGS employees. The direction of the Leadership Program was guided by a Steering Team composed of four members of the ELT, a Regional Executive, and the Leadership Program manager. A Design Team consisting of 11 employees representing all the disciplines and regions first met in April of 2001 to follow the guidance of the Steering Team in designing a program that would ultimately touch all 10,000 USGS employees. The current vision for the Leadership Program came out of the first Design Team meeting: "To create a leadership-centered culture throughout the USGS that emphasizes the importance of people in the USGS to ensure high-quality science for the benefit of society."

The bureau concept of a leadership program can best be expressed by a statement by John Kotter: "Institutionalizing a leadership-centered culture is the ultimate act of leadership." A leadership program for only those at the higher GS levels was insufficient if we truly hoped to establish and promote a leadership-centered culture. Therefore, in the summer of 2002, the next step the Leadership Program took was to recruit graduates of L201 and various government leadership programs to be trained through Train-the-Trainer workshops. These 24 dedicated instructors and coaches then went out to present the leadership principles and concepts to other USGS employees through the Leadership Intensive classes. These classes are two-day classes held around the country in various USGS offices, taught by a team of these USGS trainers (two instructors and one coach). Since 2002, approximately 10 classes a year have been held, touching almost 600 USGS employees, at all grade levels, in all positions, and in all the regions and headquarters.

The leadership principles are also incorporated into other programs presented by OED such as the Supervisory Challenge courses, the Orientation program, and the Mentoring program.

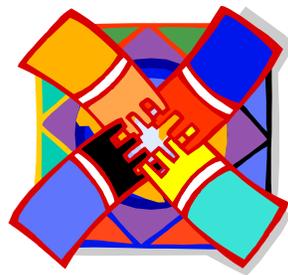
Besides the classes, the Leadership Program has continued to create a leadership-centered culture through tools to help spread the leadership message such as the Guiding Principles cards and posters, the Leadership coin, the annual Excellence in Leadership Award, and the leadership link on the Office of Employee Development's website (<http://training.gov>).

The Leadership Program, with the support of senior managers and leadership graduates, has been moving forward in its goal over the last six years. Grassroots support has also been provided by the Central Region Leadership Group, the Reston Leadership Group, as well as a group in Menlo Park and, just recently, an office in North Carolina. These groups meet periodically to support each other to keep the leadership fire burning. Many people have been involved in spreading the leadership principles and supporting each other. However, as most programs are doing across the bureau, we need to take a look at how to accomplish our goals with fewer resources.

The following references may help you in working with the issue and challenges of this Action Learning Scenario:

**References:**

- “Improving Work Life” by Dan Sussman – T&D, March 2005 (Attachment 1)
- “Managing Your Boss” by J. Gabarro and J. Kotter – Harvard Business Review, January 2005 (Attachment 2)
- Mission statement and function of the Reston Leadership Group (Attachment 3)
- Information on the Central Region Leadership Group (Attachment 4)
- Copy of Leadership Program Marketing Book (Attachment 5)
- Leadership website: <http://training.usgs.gov>



*Leadership 201*  
*July 11-15, 2005*

**Leadership** . . . getting to the  of the matter