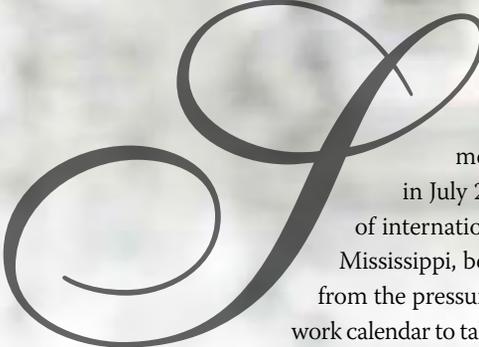


# CREATING LEADERS



SOON AFTER ATTENDING NAFSA's Executive Development Leadership Program (ELDP) in July 2004, Michael Johansson, director of international programs at the University of Mississippi, began deliberately carving time out from the pressures and responsibilities of his daily work calendar to take a systemic look at his university's environment from the perspective of these international students. Consciously taking a view "from the balcony"—as business consultant Peter Krembs, a regular presenter in the ELDP, offered in conjunction with the Carlson School of Management, puts it—Johansson analyzed the students' basic needs, trying to understand what factors could make Ole Miss even more appealing to them. This led him, among numerous other initiatives, to approach the university counseling center to find a way to transport international students to the ethnic groceries in the nearest town, a service that has proved very popular.

Soon after the summer of 2005, Larry Bell, director of international programs at the University of Colorado-Boulder, began applying negotiation principles he had learned in the ELDP in his work with top university administrators. Using a sorting mechanism that may have been partially intuitive but that had become *conscious*—and therefore more effective—after he attended the program, Bell sought to influence university-wide decisions by first identifying and then eliminating from negotiations those factors that could not be changed.

Sarah Stevenson, director of international programs at the University of St. Thomas, works in a team-oriented environment and had been an effective manager for many years. The ELDP validated much about how she went about her work. It also provided her with new, systematic approaches to help teams perform well (techniques involving balanced group membership, goal setting, communication, and the like). "I found the program empowering. I am more deliberate in what I do now. The week made me feel more confident in my abilities as a leader."

*Leadership training has the power to transform how international educators think of their role on their campuses and in the higher education system at large.*



BY EVE KATZ

# FOR TOMORROW

Patricia Burak, director of the Slutzker Center for International Services at Syracuse University, returned from the ELDP invigorated in her thinking about the best configuration for international education on campus. Stimulated by her time in the program and her conversations with other participants, she came back confirmed in her conviction that international education and the globalization of a university is key to an institution's success and that this perspective should, therefore, be represented at the highest levels of university administration. She has been working actively to achieve this internationalization of her campus.

As these few examples illustrate, international educators who participate in professional development activities appropriate to their experience and their capacities can enrich their own working lives, enhance their students' stay, benefit their institutions, and strengthen the profession of international education.



**“When I talk about steps in managing change, I have to make adjustments. In universities the process is driven more by committees, coalition building, the politics of the situation than by directives. How do you influence groups of people? The process may be longer; you are working with analytical types who may need more data to support the change.”**



### **A Hot Topic**

*Leadership* is a hot topic and leadership development a thriving business. Looking for a book on leadership? Amazon will offer you 181,694 titles. Search under *leadership development* and you will find 12,550 choices; *leadership training* yields 10,329 items. And this doesn't include the many thousands of articles on the subject. Over the last decades, business has been increasingly willing to invest in leadership development, as consultants have discovered, making executive coaching and training a lucrative line of work. Companies report that the training yields measurable results: higher productivity, better customer service, increased retention of qualified employees, lowered costs, and greater profitability.

The relevance of business management and leadership skills to the noncommercial sector has become clearer in recent years, as more has been written—and read—and more professionals from various fields have attended training programs. To be sure, analogies from one type of enterprise to another can sometimes be a stretch. In an article on “The Essence of Leadership,” Pete Smith, president and chief executive officer of the Private Sector Council, gives an example from the world of sports to illustrate the need for courage in dealing with poor performance. Football coach Lou Holtz, he says, was once asked how he developed such extraordinary motivation on his teams. “It’s easy,” Holtz replied. “We just get rid of the ones who aren’t motivated.” This will surely prompt a raised eyebrow, and perhaps a smile, from anyone at a university (holding a position other than coach), where command authority hardly exists.

### **Leadership in Business and Academe**

JoAnn McCarthy, assistant provost for international affairs at the University of Pennsylvania and chair-elect of NAFSA’s International Education Leadership Knowledge Community (IELKC), speaks of “leading from the side.” Leadership in academe, she says, consists of nudging and cajoling, creating consensus, inspiring. “The key is communicating a vision so people can see their role in achieving it.” McCarthy points to the Wharton School of Business on her campus as a source of innovative models that can be useful in other parts of the university. “When you learn about an approach that differs from

the one you have been using, you think ‘why couldn’t we do that?’ You realize how much you have accepted the common wisdom.”

Zinta Konrad, director of international education at the College of DuPage, has a similar view. She came to the ELDP with experience in business and says, “There’s a lot to be said for applying business principles to education. Accountability and goal setting have stood me in good stead.” (Konrad thought so highly of the program, she returned for a second session.) Joe Hindrawan, assistant vice provost for international education at the University at Buffalo, brought to the program the perspective of someone who holds an M.B.A. Describing the ELDP, he says: “Presenters and participants have the challenge of applying concepts and principles from a business environment to higher education. That isn’t always easy. For example, decisionmaking becomes much more complicated when, as in higher education, you have so many constituent groups to which you are accountable.” Paul Feltman, director of strategic planning at World Education Services, who says the ELDP “was a phenomenal program,” agrees that the greatest challenge for presenters is to extrapolate from the business setting to the campus setting. “Some succeed better than others, but it also takes work from participants.”

Program presenter Louellen Essex, a consultant with more than 20 years experience helping executives, managers, and others become better leaders, is aware of the challenge. She and other ELDP faculty constantly confer with NAFSA representatives on the specific needs of program participants and rely heavily on feedback from attendees about every segment of the program. She uses appropriate templates and various techniques—lectures, small group discussions, exercises based on actual participant experiences, activities that require interaction—to create a learning community where participants become comfortable with risk-taking. Essex knows that universities and companies differ in many ways. “When I talk about steps in managing change, I have to make adjustments. In universities the process is driven more by committees, coalition building, the politics of the situation than by directives. How do you influence groups of people? The process may be longer; you are working with analytical types who may need more data to support the change.”

## Choices, Choices

Leadership development programs are plentiful throughout the United States. The challenge is to find one that fits your needs and budget. As part of a range of leadership development activities, the American Council on Education (ACE) brings together college and university presidents and chief academic officers to discuss leadership strategies for internationalizing campuses and curricula. Another group, the Association of International Education Administrators, offers professional development seminars of 10 to 15 participants in intensive three-day retreats. The Chair Academy, working with department chairs of the Maricopa Community Colleges in Arizona, runs a program for mid-level organizational leaders from postsecondary institutions, with two weeks of residential training, bridged by a year-long practicum with coaching and mentoring; it has piloted an Academy for Advanced Leadership, attended by leaders from around the world, that also combines residential training seminars with a practicum experience of several months. The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL), with campuses in the United States and abroad, works with leaders from many sectors, including education; its programs reached 20,000 participants in 2005. The Intercultural Communication Institute, a private, nonprofit foundation in Oregon, conducts education and training in intercultural communication; its thirtieth annual Summer Institute took place in July of 2006 over a period of three days. This list is far from exhaustive.

Many universities provide leadership development programs. Some are designed for its own personnel, like the initiatives of The University of Texas at Austin, which within the Vice President for Employee and Campus Service Portfolio, seeks to achieve culture change and improvements in customer service and innovation throughout many administrative offices of the university. Other programs are intended for outside participants and operate through the business school and other units of the university.

The National Leadership Institute of the University of Maryland University College, a network associate of the CCL, delivers a range of leadership training programs and services to managers and executives in both the public and private sector. A small proportion of its audience is drawn from universities and nonprofits, “for whom the cost can be an issue,” says Carol Dell’Amore, director of the Institute. A three-day program costs \$3,800; a five-day program \$6,800. Coaching packages, available in 6, 12, and 18 hours run from \$2,500 to \$7,000.

One-on-one coaching (or what academics might call mentoring and sports professionals know as personal training) “is one of the most important and popular approaches to leadership development these days,” says Dell’Amore. It can be done inside an organization, structured so that a potential leader meets regularly with a senior administrator who provides guidance. The advantage of this approach (besides cost savings) is that the “coach” knows the political environment and players of the institution; the possible downside is that the mentor must be skilled in coaching and

supremely trustworthy if this very open relationship is to work. (The ACE Fellows Program uses an analogous approach: emerging leaders spend an extended period of time on a campus other than their own, working directly with presidents and other senior people. They observe and participate in key meetings and events, and take on special projects and assignments while under the mentorship of a team of experienced administrators.)

Throughout the year, the Harvard Business School offers more than 45 specialized Executive Education programs, ranging in length from 2 days to 9 weeks. High-potential leaders can participate in an intensive five-day program that costs \$10,500. Typically, business school programs carry a much higher price tag than programs from other units. Thus, two 12-day Harvard programs in higher education, offered through its School of Education, will cost \$5,950 in 2007. The series of about half a dozen programs is organized to correspond to various levels of professional growth: the Management Development Program (MDP) targets “middle managers” and the Institute for Management and Leadership in Education (IEM) is geared to more experienced people at the dean/assistant and associate vice president levels.

Elena Garate, dean of the International Education Center at Santa Monica College, took part in one of these programs and found its case-study approach especially useful. Producing something like the *Rashoman* effect (referring to the Japanese film of that name, in which various observers describe the same reality as filtered through their individual experience), program participants analyzed actual cases to determine what did take place, what did not, and what should have happened. Garate has found the technique extremely valuable in working with her own staff.

Two international educators have had excellent experiences at Stanford University. June Noronha, past president of NAFSA and now strategic planning officer at the Bush Foundation, who has attended NAFSA’s ELDP, took part in a six-day Stanford University program for philanthropists, to which she gave high marks. Mariam Assefa, current NAFSA president, found the Stanford program for business people very useful.

Specialized programs are available, like Bryn Mawr College’s Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education, a four-week program for college administrators and faculty. It emphasizes the globalization of higher education and the growing diversity of the student body and work force and includes a curricular unit devoted to professional development; the 2006 fee was \$6,800. Again, this list is only illustrative.

## Genesis of the NAFSA Executive Development Leadership Program

With so many programs available, why did NAFSA develop its own? The short answer is this: NAFSA did not find an existing program that fully met the needs of its members. NAFSA leaders sought a program offering outstanding leadership training that could be applied

to the experience of international educators. Following work with a focus group, which wanted training to complement existing NAFSA offerings, the association convened a group of NAFSA representatives to determine what kind of leadership training they thought would be most useful; these NAFSA representatives met with a management expert and a training designer to work through how a curriculum might look. This concept was then put out for bids and the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota was chosen on the basis of its broad experience working with various types of organizations, its record in adapting to their different needs, and its competitive price.

From the start, the ELDP was conceived as a program in leadership rather than management, a distinction Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus put as follows: “Management controls, arranges, does things right; leadership unleashes energy, sets the vision so we do the right thing” (in *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge*). To be sure, a good leader should also be a good manager, but “in addition to being accomplished administrators who develop and implement sound policies, procedures, and practices, effective administrators are also leaders who shape the school’s culture by creating and articulating a vision, winning support for it, and inspiring others to attain it” (P.C. Duttweiler and S.M. Hord in *Dimensions of Effective Leadership*).

The ELDP can be viewed as part of a larger NAFSA effort to understand “what international education leaders need to know how to do and the kind of knowledge they need to have,” according to Norm Peterson, vice provost for international education at Montana State University and incoming chair of NAFSA’s IELKC. This group is currently finalizing a survey project, using the Delphi methodology, to identify the knowledge areas and skill sets important for the profession. Results will go to NAFSA program planners who will be able to review the entire NAFSA training portfolio in that context. Riall Nolan, dean of international programs and associate provost at Purdue University, and current chair of NAFSA’s IELKC, underscores the need to define the profession of international education leader—a person who can hold a range of titles on campus—and to develop a track into that profession for younger mid-level people.

### Focusing on the Future

This is where the ELDP can play a significant role. Jerry Wilcox, director of the international office at the University of Texas at Austin, has already sent two younger people in his office to the program and hopes to send at least one more. He has seen the program benefit not only attendees; it can also have a powerful multiplier effect. Once back on campus, his director of English as a Second Language services and his director of international student and scholar services organized a day-and-a-half retreat presenting exercises and principles acquired at the ELDP to their colleagues, an event Wilcox says was very popular and useful.

Stephen C. Dunnett, professor and vice provost for international education at the State University of New York at Buffalo, has also

encouraged people to attend. He believes professional development has many purposes. For example, a mid-level person from a university branch in Singapore found the ELDP valuable in dealing with Americans who go to her country. A leadership development program has yet another benefit, Dunnett points out: “It is sometimes harder to measure, but one feels it. The person comes back with more self-confidence, better able to persuade and motivate people. You get a certificate; you were singled out in your organization. It has prestige value” (a view that university administrators echoed frequently). Like many of his colleagues at the higher levels of administration, Dunnett underscores that the need for leadership development lies at the mid-level. “The number twos in the organization: that is where the need is and that is where the return on investment is the greatest.”

In its first three years, enrollment in the ELDP has ranged from 15 to 18 participants. The program is designed to accommodate more people, and with time NAFSA is defining the target audience with greater clarity. One participant felt that the term *executive* in the program name might mislead people into thinking ELDP aimed only at the senior international educator, when in fact it is intended for *future* executives. Many participants expressed the view that as word gets around, administrators at the senior levels will find a way to send more staff members to the program. No quality enterprise was “built in a day.” The first Harvard program began in 1969 and with a long presence in the market, the offerings now attract hundreds of participants each year. Harvard recruitment relies heavily on word of mouth from alumni, who know which of their colleagues would benefit from participation. Listservs keep the individual participants connected to one another and to the program organizer. Harvard has developed productive relationships with institutions that send people every year, and there are independent opportunities to apply as well. But building an active alumni base and institutional relationships takes time.

Several ELDP participants stressed the great value of networking and the potential benefit of more organized communication among alumni of the program. They repeated how important it is to assure a diverse participant group. In the spirit of continuous improvement, they spoke of the need for presenters to continue refining their cross-cultural sensitivities and their understanding of the distinctive features of international education activities on campus. Many participants suggested a role for more intensive training in “politics,” that is, advocacy for international education within an institution. But all participants interviewed for this article were, to use business lingo, *extremely satisfied customers*. They, and their supervisors, agree that leadership development helps the individual, the international office, the university, and the profession.

IE

**EVE KATZ** is a freelance writer and editor based in Bethesda, Maryland. Her most recent article for *IE* was “Recruiting International Graduate Students Today” which appeared in the July/August 2006 issue.