

Growing Leaders From Within

A lifelong student of leadership, SmithBucklin President & CEO Henry Givray recognizes the integral role that leadership plays in ensuring both SmithBucklin and its client organizations are vital, value-creating and sustainable. According to Givray, there are no simple formulas or instruction manuals on how to become a true leader. There are, however, certain concepts, principles and guidelines, and he believes these can be learned and applied only through a process of personal, active engagement and self-discovery. It was these tenets, among others, that influenced and guided Givray's decision to create the SmithBucklin Leadership Learning Forum, which launched in 2011.

What is the SmithBucklin Leadership Learning Forum?

The SmithBucklin Leadership Learning Forum is an intensive, high-impact 12-month program for a small group of top-performers in our company. The program exposes them to leadership concepts, principles and guidelines in order to stimulate and inspire individual learning and personal growth. The program is a gift of great value and lifelong impact.

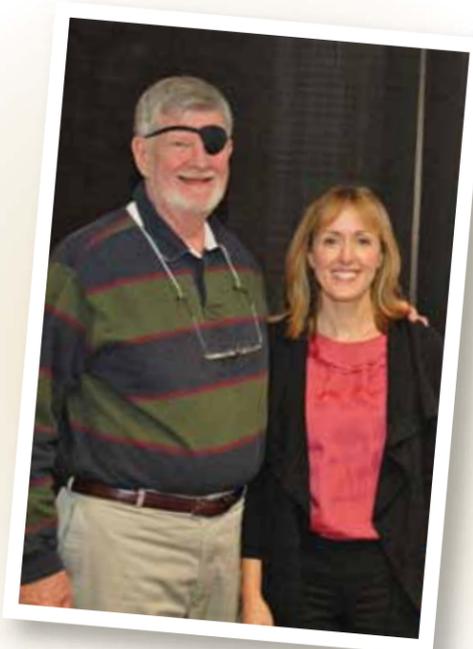
Why was it important for you to develop and launch such a program within SmithBucklin?

As CEO, an essential part of my job is to enable the achievement of desired annual results. At SmithBucklin, that includes client satisfaction and retention, employee engagement and retention, new business success and financial performance, among other responsibilities. But as a CEO who also aspires to be a true leader, my overarching goal is to build a great, enduring company. One of the foundational requirements in the journey toward greatness is to build leadership capacity and performance throughout the company; that is, grow leaders from within.

What were your thoughts and considerations leading up to the program's launch in 2011?

Since 2008, I have been thinking about and pondering how best to grow leaders at many levels within SmithBucklin in a way that is purposeful, organized, disciplined, impactful and sustainable. In early 2010, I finally had my ideas and thoughts around content, desired outcomes, student selection and other key aspects sufficiently

developed to seriously begin planning. But I needed two key partners to help me shape and successfully implement the program. First, though my plan was to build the program's content based on the leadership framework that I had developed over the years, I recognized



Givray's co-facilitators Dick Dooley, president of TDG, Inc., and Colette Huzinec, SmithBucklin's chief human resources officer.

that I did not have the knowledge or experience around instructional design that maximizes student learning and self-discovery. To help me in this area, I reached out to Dick Dooley, someone I've known for more than 25 years. During the past 35 plus years, Dick has perfected a unique and compelling approach that helps high-potential people learn and grow. My goal was to leverage Dick's expertise and wisdom as well as adopt certain of his methods, tools and exercises in order to create our own unique leadership program. Second, I also needed someone within SmithBucklin to not only help me manage the program but also to add value to its development and implementation. My ideal candidate was Colette Huzinec, who today is SmithBucklin's chief human resources officer, but at the time was responsible for our internal professional development and training. After 10 months of intense planning and countless hours of collaborative working sessions and individual efforts, we officially launched the SmithBucklin Leadership Learning Forum on March 4, 2011.

Can you describe the program's design and structure?

The SmithBucklin Leadership Learning Forum relies heavily on active facilitation, advance reading, invited guests, homework assignments, lecturettes and exercises/activities. These elements provoke, stimulate, provide context, illuminate ideas and create an environment for reflection, self-discovery, learning and growth via open dialogue, sharing, debate and mutual problem solving.

As mentioned above, we've built the content based on the leadership framework and its underlying principles and concepts that I've developed over the years. The context, of course, is SmithBucklin's business, culture and work environment. There are eight two-day off-site sessions, plus one day of orientation over the span of 12 months. Students can expect to spend four to eight hours per week on reading, homework and preparation in between sessions. Colette and I facilitate the sessions and, in 2011, Dick Dooley also attended all of them, offering insights and wisdom

as well as facilitating several discussions and exercises.

How are candidates identified and selected?

Each year in the fall I invite 15 to 20 individuals to apply for the program. For each candidate, the application process includes an initial meeting with me, responding in writing to five questions, and a final meeting with me to review written responses. All candidates must be in the manager, senior manager, director, senior director or vice president job family. To be considered, an individual must be a recognized top performer, demonstrate potential for executive management duties and responsibilities, and embody SmithBucklin's values. To be accepted into the program, candidates must also be able to show and/or have demonstrated a deep commitment to

personal learning and growth, as well as a willingness to sacrifice personal time to the rigors and demands of the program.

How would you grade year one of the program?

I am enormously proud of the program's accomplishments and the depth of the students' engagement during its inaugural year. In addition to experiencing meaningful, substantive growth, students have also forged deep, enduring bonds with and among each other. As importantly, I'm confident in the program's far-reaching and long-term impact on both the individual students and on SmithBucklin. Just like leadership's never-ending journey, however, the SmithBucklin Leadership Learning Forum will continue to evolve and grow for the benefit of our company and for our client organizations, today and into the future. •

The Logo and Its Meaning

The **orb** (sphere) represents the Leadership Learning Forum (LLF). As derived by the ancient Romans, it is a symbol of the cosmos as a harmonious whole.

The **dots** in an unstructured pattern represent LLF's two essential learning components. They are all connected and represent integrated and individual learning. 1) The principles, concepts, ideas and guidelines upon which the LLF curriculum is built. 2) The vehicles, formats and means by which students learn.



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The **reflection** represents student self-reflection and self-discovery.

The **unseen dots** on the far side of the orb represent the surprises, revelations and discoveries in meaning and personal growth that the LLF process generates. They are not specified anywhere, but they will happen even if the student isn't focused on them. They are important to individualized learning and self-discovery.

The **upward-sloping arc** represents the student who is learning and growing during LLF and will continue to grow forever post-LLF.