Review of Best Practices for Technical Leadership Development

NDIA Systems Engineering Conference
26 October 2017

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Review of Best Practices for Technical Leadership Development from Organizational Benchmarking
Context

✈ Part of SERC Technical Leadership Research Topic
✈ Co-sponsored by DAU and DASD(SE)
  - Developed a technical leadership development framework
  - Defined three career levels
  - Vetted a set of 24 competencies

Conducted a set of organizational benchmarking visits
Methodology

- Identified organizations with “best-in-class” reputations for technical leadership development
- Conducted benchmarking visits with each
- Interviewed one or more SME managers familiar with the organization’s approach to technical leadership development
- Structured, competency based interview protocol
- Open-ended discussion
Organizations

- U.S. Navy Quality Management
- ONR
- U.S. Navy Strategic Systems Program
- NAVSEA
- Sandia
- Raytheon Missile Systems
- NASA Marshall Space Flight Center
- DAU Southeast Region
- U.S. Army ARDEC
- Lockheed-Martin
- Gulfstream
- Accenture
- Missile Defense Agency
Caveats

- Not a human subject study, so no personal data were collected.
- Observations by/opinions of SMEs at organizational level within agency/company.
- Not for attribution at any level.
- Results were incorporated in the TLDF study.
Synopsis of Best Practices Found

- Local tailoring
- Emerging leader ownership of process execution
- Evidence based metrics
- HR/line organization/project organization collaborated as equal partners

Other observations:
- Starts before first day of work
- Continuous across career stages
- All used many methods to impart competencies
Local Tailoring

Tailored geographically
Tailored organizationally
Emerging Leader Ownership of Process Execution

❖ Tools are provided to emerging leaders to track and manage their own competency attainment
❖ Workshops and group meetings to cement progress and maintain commitment
Metrics from Evidence Based Competency Achievements

- Competency attainment plotted on spider/radar charts by participant
- Evidence from tangible achievements noted

- 360° Feedback provides quality assessment of claim
- Process separate from performance assessment and is not used to make salary decisions
HR/Line/Project Collaboration

- Support for leadership development is from executive leadership level
- HR, functional management, and project management all provide support and encouragement as a team
- In some cases, these three entities collaborate in assigning emerging leaders to developmental positions
Additional Features

- Application of multiple development methods
- Continuous development across career stages
- Starts before day one
  - “Making the offer sticky”
Acknowledgments

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References


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