**WHITE PAPER**

ICLI
International Collaborative Leadership Institute
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BUILDING TRUSTED LEADERS

The EDUCATIONAL CASE for PRACADEMIA

# A New Paradigm for Leadership Development

*Why Leadership Training Has Failed and How to Fix It*

## #2 in a Six-Part Series
## What Went Wrong
### *Four Flaws in Leadership Development*

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# Purpose

Leadership Development has not fulfilled its promise to produce great leaders.

What's more, business executives are dissatisfied with the results of Executive Education.

The problem is compounded by the rapid change in the structure of commerce – a genuine paradigm shift.

> Leadership Development is needed now more now than ever.

GAME CHANGER STRATEGY   Collaborative Excellence

This Six-Part Series examines the problems and obstacles and what can be done to invigorate the Leadership Development process, creating a Game Changer Strategy to shift the paradigm from Executive Education & Development to Advanced Organization Transformation:

**#1 – The Shocking Truth:** *The Massive Failure of Leadership Development*
**#2 – What's Wrong:** *Three Major Flaws in Leadership Development*
**#3 – New Paradigm in Executive Education:** *Transformative Action Learning Engagement*
**#4 – Systems Architecture:** *Reframing Organization Transformation*
**#5 – Designing the Future:** *Creating Breakthroughs & Shifting Paradigms*
**#6 -- Long Term Shift Required:** *"Colliberative" Education & the 12 Concordances*

## #2 What's Wrong: Three Major Flaws in Leadership Development
### Executive Summary

In White Paper #1 we addressed the magnitude of the failure of leadership development. In this paper we examine four major flaws in the way leadership is designed and delivered.

Business executives are not satisfied with the results being produced by Executive Education, which has failed to live up to the expectation it will produce leaders who can transform organizations.

Chief Learning Officers (CLOs), are being challenged to find concrete justification for their training expenses.  A recent survey found that only a third of line managers felt "they have become much more effective after taking part in development programs." Other critics claim that only little more than 10% of the $200 billion training and development expenditures produce results of any real value because people soon revert to their old ways of doing things.

> It's time to reexamine Leadership Development process from top to bottom,
> from inside to outside, and bottoms up.

We find major flaws in the standard "accepted" process that was causing failures, false starts, and faulty execution. Here's what we found that was causing the misfires – like an engine firing on only half its cylinders:

- **Lack of a Collaborative Systems Design Architecture** means there is no "mind-map" for distinguishing true collaboration from other forms of human interaction, making it difficult for leaders to create alignments in their organizations. This results in a patchwork of helter-skelter approaches to leadership, with are ineffective and incoherent.

- **Structural Impediments in Academia** represent the institution's **Failure to Evolve,** which has deep repercussions on leadership development which have dragged down value of academia's delivery of learning. The impediments and failure to evolve shows up in three areas:
    a. **Silo Mentality** of departments that fragment learning, which generates
    b. **Bloated cost structure** that erodes the value equation of education
    c. **Outmoded Learning Delivery Methodologies** which have failed to produce measurable useful impacts in Executive Education.

- **Disconnects & Misalignments** between strategic stakeholders in the educational delivery value chain constitute a pervasive and endemic breakdown. Executive Education has three vested interests: *academia*, *individual learners*, and *corporations that pay the bill*. Because no one has taken responsibility as a "systems integrator," learning institutions, individual development, corporate goals, and organizational development are never allied nor aligned – each on different pages singing different music.

Our approach to Collaborative Systems Design Architecture, Action-Learning, and creating Strategic, Cultural, Operational alignments are intended to fix the flaws in a withering system – creating twice the impact at half the cost.

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### Compelling Need for New Leadership

In today's fast moving, rapidly changing world, where uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity reigns, there is a compelling requirement a leadership development.

However, the kind of leadership we need isn't what was served up in the past. It's a new form – a *Collaborative Leadership* that goes beyond transformational aspirations to produce real synergies, where people are more than just "engaged" – they are excited to interact in teams to innovate and add value every day – all the time finding meaning and purpose in both the work itself and the people.

Corporate leaders must direct this unfolding -- making people aware of the design architecture that needs to be implemented, giving people the strategies, mind-sets and tool-sets for building innovative and adaptive organizations, creating the cultures that reinforce collaborative performance, and rewarding people for teamwork and alliance building.

Today's company is challenged to make the shift from old transactional, hierarchical structures, with its guarded functional silos to a more integrated, networked system of cross-functional teams that can utilize the power of digital "adhocracies" based on alignment with corporate strategy and trust-based culture. Front line leaders are faced with a monumental task of transforming their organizations into agile, innovative, value-creators. To do this, they must bolster their ability to tap into the huge potential in their workforce. This is done by better understanding how to use *culture as a strategic lever,* where trust and teamwork are the central organizing principles.

It's a paradigm shift requiring new mind-sets, skill-sets, tool-sets, and something that goes unheralded: "systems-sets," the design architectures that support a new paradigm.

### Caught in the Paradigm Chasm

Leadership today is caught in the chasm betwixt the old and the new— the chasm presents three basic options:



1) a freefall into hell, or
2) a retrogression as we try to reclaim a past that is quickly becoming a reflective illusion, or
3) a proactive adventure to design a bold new future capturing opportunities while learning new things at the organizational, team, and individual levels.

> To exercise the third option, we need both a vision and a system design architecture that is well articulated at all levels.

So too must the Learning and Development profession adapt its approach. Executive Education must align with the bold but disruptive changes climbing our doorsteps; so far it is not rising high enough.

While change is never easy; paradigm shifts are doubly more difficult because there are more unknown factors that need addressing from multiple points of view, and more point of implementation innovation is required at every moment of engagement. These are best. Companies and staff shy away

from mastering what is dramatically different, knowing what they'd rather preserve from the past than what they'd like to invent for the future.

Paradigm shifts are neither quick nor simple fixes, primarily because the *organizational systems* must change, not just a few adjustments to a processes and basic improvements to some practices.

*When collaboration and trust are missing, failure is destined for paradigm shifting.*

Making paradigm shifts is compounded by the legacy thinking, hierarchical structures, vested interests, and infrastructure investments that stand to lose power and prestige if the shift occurs. It is these people who will resist the shift most strenuously, providing all the old reasons why incremental change is more "reasonable." The reality of disruptive paradigm shifts is that making the change is hard work, filled with risk and uncertainty, and often unforgiving. Many people are simply not dissatisfied enough to take the chance on change.

Organizational change requires multi-dimensional orchestration. It starts with an acknowledgement of the problem, a desire to invest the time, resources, and pain to make the change, and the willingness to deal with the unintended consequences that may emerge. In collaborative cultures, those unintended consequences often are positive, while in more adversarial conditions, the culture will foster chaos and confusion. Often the shift will require the replacement of significant numbers of leaders, particularly those who contributed to the problems and have no willingness to move forward.

## Dissatisfaction with Transformation Efforts

We've heard an endless stream of complaints from senior executives that their efforts constantly ran into difficulties in execution and resistance to change. Business leaders also

*Transformation has been more an aspiration than a reality.*

have not been happy with the results of transformation efforts from Executive Education, which has produced a less-than-satisfactory return on investment. Most people attending programs get reinjected back into an organizational system that simply does not support new ideas or operations. Executive Education is more than pleased to sign up students for classes, but does not see its responsibility to coordinate closely with business leaders to ensure that the right teams come to the training, nor to facilitate their re-emersion back into their organizations in a manner that will produce excellent results.

Millennials at the other end of the age spectrum are even harsher in their critiques. Impatient with lagging responsiveness, they see senior managers as dragging their feet, lacking in innovation, and unable to align the real demands of the business with leadership development programs that are aimed at real change at the day-to-day operational level.

What's gone wrong? What's missing? Why are businesses missing the mark? What is blocking the shift? What's keeping Executive Education from producing powerful results? We will explore the reasons.

## #2 What's Wrong: Three Major Flaws in Leadership Development

### Leadership Development's Three Great Flaws

We've identified four significant flaws in strategic thinking about Leadership Development that are causing the transformational leadership tailspin:

1. **Lack of Systems Architecture**
2. **Structural Impediments in Academia**
3. **Disconnects & Misalignments**

*Businesses continue to fuel their training budgets expecting to stimulate some great performance improvement. Instead they should be shifting their thinking about how people learn and leaders are developed.*

Each of these has been a major impediment for years. However, current conditions make these even more obvious and frustrating. The good news is: each can be overcome with the right guidance and strategies.

### 1. Flaw #1: Lack of Systems Architecture

If you were tasked to put a man on the moon, you'd have a carefully conceived design architecture that integrated all the human and technical systems together. Similarly, our human bodies are adroitly crafted to enable fluid performance of all the subsystems (cardio-vascular, gastro-intestinal, etc.) and their affiliated components (organs such as heart, stomach, etc.) in a coordinated and intelligent fashion (the function of the brain). These are just examples of *systems* that keep the world functioning.

*Architecture is the design that aligns, integrates, and enables a system's diverse components to function efficiently & synergistically.*

Apply this thinking to Leadership Development and what emerges?

A disjointed, convoluted patchwork of often contradictory theories, admonitions, personal stories, competing skill-sets, disjointed processes, and poorly integrated frameworks that all-too-often



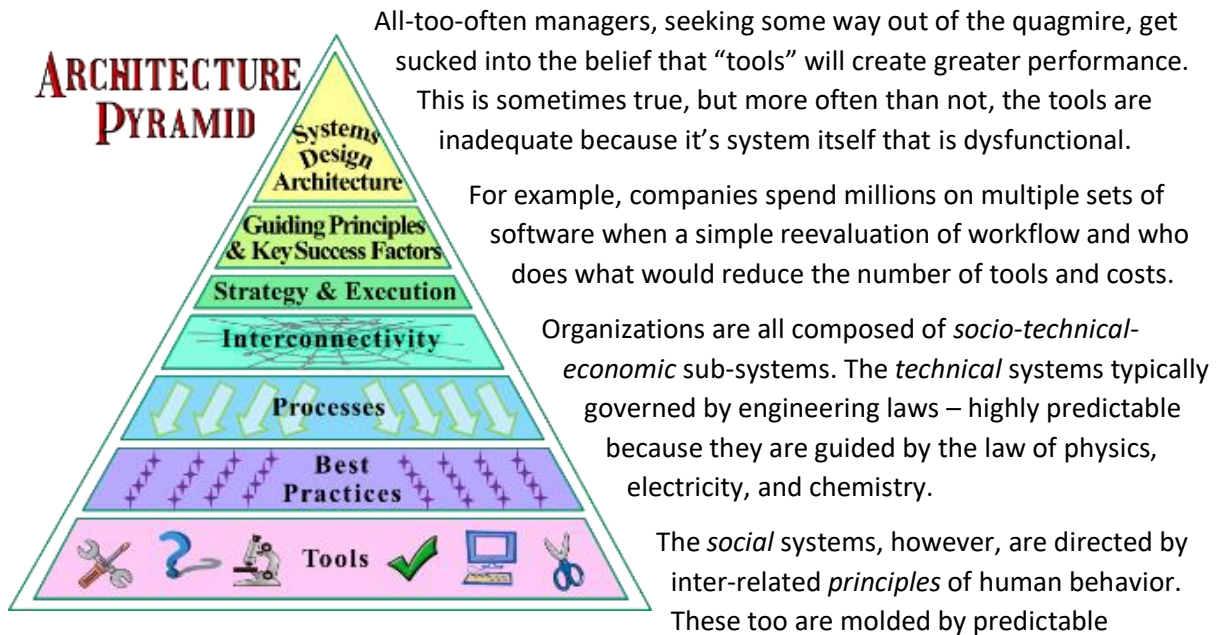Figure 1: Patchwork Results from Lack of Systems Design Architecture

idealize a business guru, or self-glorify the academic institution or the author, while leaving little assurance to businesses that the outcome has a strong chance of success.

This is a massive tragic flaw in organizational thinking and leadership development.

The lack of an architecture to identify critical success factors, interrelationships, control, and feedback loops is the central weakness of leadership programs. This is what actually reinforces compartmentalized, fragmented, silo mentalities in organizations.

With no over-arching design guidance, we have continually defaulted into shoddy thinking, edification of the latest flavor of the month, all the while promoting an enduringly fractured and fragmented body of thinking where one approach fails to cross-connect with another framework, thus increasing the unwieldy burden of weaving of all these disparate ideas into a whole cloth.

It is no wonder we have leaders who embrace a muddled conglomeration of conflicting ideas, piecemeal thinking and an affinity to quick fixes problems that are caused by broken systems.



All-too-often managers, seeking some way out of the quagmire, get sucked into the belief that "tools" will create greater performance. This is sometimes true, but more often than not, the tools are inadequate because it's system itself that is dysfunctional.

For example, companies spend millions on multiple sets of software when a simple reevaluation of workflow and who does what would reduce the number of tools and costs.

Organizations are all composed of *socio-technical-economic* sub-systems. The *technical* systems typically governed by engineering laws – highly predictable because they are guided by the law of physics, electricity, and chemistry.

The *social* systems, however, are directed by inter-related *principles* of human behavior. These too are molded by predictable outcomes, *if* one understands the "invisible" influence of things as *trust, culture, fear, uncertainty*, and *behavioral psychology*.

*Economic* systems are a blend of *technical* (such as accounting) and *social* (such as marketing & sales) systems (*behavioral economics*).

Because very few leaders have a conception of the Systems Design Architecture of collaboration needed to boost organizational functioning, they never get their hands on the levers of transformation, constantly dropping into the chasm between strategy and execution, becoming co-dependent enablers of silo mentalities and fragmented value flow.

The lack of this collaborative architecture is why so many companies, leaders, alliances, acquisitions and turnarounds fail or are unsustainable.

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Ironically, many experienced managers we spoke to said they were collaborative, but when we opened the windows and doors to their organizations, we found distrust, poor teamwork, and faulty cross-functional integration.

For example, in these companies, HR managers were focused on individual's benefits and hiring, but not on how to help execute strategy, develop collaborative teams, or creating internal alliances between functional silos. HR was not an equal partner in the corporate strategy development, so they could not bring in the right people that support the organizations long term vision. HR failed to make the investment in building a strategic alliance with other functions and power-bases in the organization, then blamed the C-Suite for not having a "seat at the table." Often HR was more concerned with compliance with laws and regulations, which took preeminence over building a culture of trust.

*Without a solid, fact-based Systems Design Architecture, it is extremely difficult for leaders to detect the complex patterns of human behavior and take appropriate actions that will produce high performance and synergy.*

The HR managers were meeting their diversity requirements, while never recognizing the potential of using that diversity to create engines of innovation. They were training people in competencies, but not selecting people who could bridge the boundaries of cross-functional integration. Essentially HR advocated collaboration, but acted transactionally as every

### Our Systems Design Architecture

We have addressed this problem at the Institute by developing a Systems Design Architecture for 21st century leadership that is elegant in its simplicity. Effective Leadership is the process of *aligning* the organization and its people 1) strategically, 2) culturally (behaviorally), 3) operationally, and 4) adaptively, facilitated by good, consistent communications.

The Architecture Collaborative Excellence enables these four processes to engage synergistically, thus maximizing the effectiveness of precious resources. The Architecture works because it sees human interaction from a "systems perspective" – a design structure of interconnected frameworks that aligns beliefs, ideas, evidence, processes, best practices and metrics to produce trustworthy behaviors resulting in teamwork, innovation, efficiency, high performance and synergy.

### Human Behavior & Trust Modeling

We have been deeply engaged in uncovering and designing a very illuminating set of frameworks for both human behavior and trust building that forms the foundation for energizing and sustaining collaboration via clear strategies, processes, metrics, and best practices, thereby producing highly predictable outcomes.

Our "Collaborative Systems Design Architecture" is fully integrated: going from one part to the other is seamless and fluid, incorporating frameworks, archetypes, and models into process applications that can be delivered to organizations through our *Collaborative Excellence Workshop Programs.* These are intended to engage the workforce along with value chain partners in generating collaborative advantage, innovation, and speed. This enables leaders and managers to get a firm handle on how to engage their workforce in a manner that produces synergistic results.

employee was strictly seen as an individual, not part of a unified team – there was no sense within HR that people were members of a community (common unity) called "business." This is why HR must be a collaborator in the development and execution of strategy.

*The next generation of leaders must learn to be systems architects*
*if they are to master transformation.*

Many leaders intuitively know the value of collaboration, but falter when asked about truly measurable differentials between collaborative and non-collaborative situations.

The Architecture of Collaborative Excellence enables leaders to create structures that are productive, adaptable, and fulfilling to the people who commit the largest part of their lives to work.

It addresses human interaction as a series of interconnected and interdependent systems that leaders can uses to align beliefs, ideas, evidence, and best practices to produce trustworthy behaviors resulting in teamwork, innovation, efficiency, high performance, and synergy.

Without such a design architecture, leaders are left to patch together fragments of experiences, incomplete advice, and a hodge-podge of often conflicting patterns, information, ideas,

*The Three Basic Social System Archetypes*

The design architecture of social systems can be broken down into three basic "archetypes" that have evolved in humanity.



THREE BASIC ARCHETYPES OF BEHAVIOR, CULTURE, LEADERSHIP & ECONOMICS

Adversarial   Transactional   Collaborative

How a leader triggers and reinforces these inherent archetypes will have a major impact on outcomes. In complex organizational systems, collaboration as a strategy will create large competitive advantage.

See White Paper #4 for more detail on the Three Archetypes

and processes that produce misaligned results.  By focusing on the organizational system, not the individual talent, the role of the leader shifts to becoming an organizational "architect" responsible for simultaneous alignment of four organizational dimensions: *Strategy*, *Culture*, *Operations*, and *Innovation* (dynamic realignment), then ensuring that structure, procedures, and rewards reinforce the alignment and synergistic interaction.

The aspiration of transformational leadership thereby shifts to one of systems realignment, which then redefines core roles, responsibilities, relationships, interconnections and value creation.

*The absence of a Systems Design Architecture that integrates and aligns organizations and*
*human behavior has been the biggest impediment to transformational leadership development.*

In **White Paper #4 – Systems Architecture:** *Reframing Organization Transformation* we present a clear approach to the key elements of a Systematic Design for Collaborative Excellence aimed at shifting organizations in the 21st century.
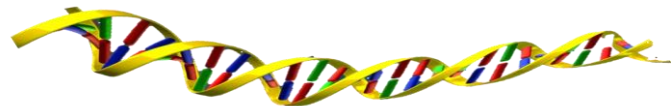
# #2 What's Wrong: Three Major Flaws in Leadership Development

## 2. Flaw #2: Structural Impediments in Academia

Leadership Development has historically been one of the stalwart realms of university based Executive Development. Corporations spend millions of dollars annually trying to develop better leaders. The money, for the most part, is wasted. The reasons for this high degree of ineffectiveness has been studied by many researchers, including our team (many of whom have also taught collaboration and leadership courses at the Graduate and Executive Development levels). Several structural flaws in academia contribute to poor performance and diminished value for corporations. These **Structural Impediments in Academia**

*Reinvention is not for the dispassionate or weak of heart.*

represent the institution's *failure to evolve,* which has deep repercussions on leadership development which have dragged down value of academia's delivery of learning. University-based Executive Education has several inbred structural impediments that can be linked back to the general dissatisfaction senior leaders have with the learning function. The impediments and failure to evolve shows up in three areas:

a. **Silo Mentality & Structure** of departments that fragment learning, which generates
b. **Bloated Cost Structure** that erodes the value equation of education
c. **Outmoded Learning Delivery Methodologies** which have failed to produce either measurable or useful impacts from Executive Education.

### a. Silo Mentality & Structure of Academia

Let's start by looking at what went wrong: at the core of academia's institutional structure are a set of fiefdoms called "departments" each with their highly protected specializations, identified by names familiar to all of us: history, psychology, economics, biology, engineering, and so forth.
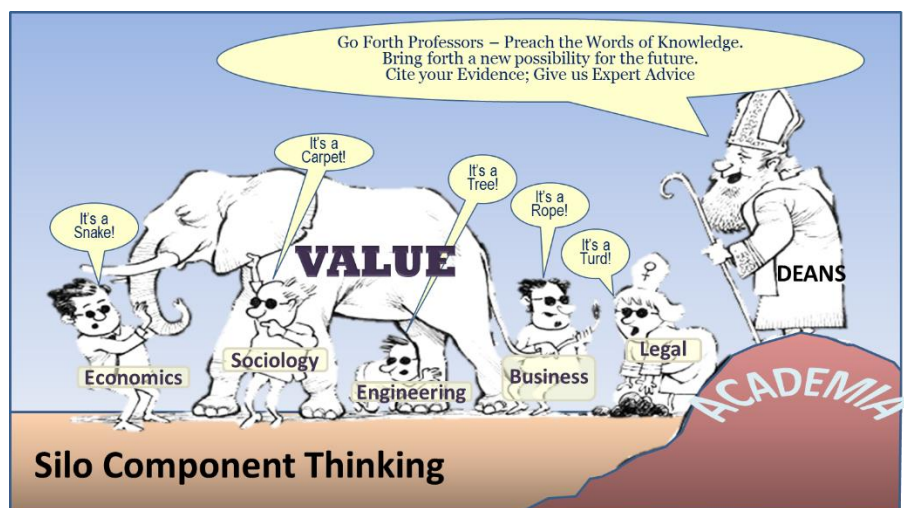


This "siloed" mentality is not just in academia, it shows up in business as well with departmentalized functions like accounting finance, international business, strategy, research, operations, marketing, and so forth.

The point is that siloed functions are not integrated and further don't speak to across boundaries in a seamless series of inter-connected processes. Specialization of functional expertise is a good thing because it maximizes the unique capabilities of people. However, the value of this expertise is then diminished when the organizational culture is burdened with the baggage of *transactional* (or even *adversarial*) behaviors when they should be acting *collaboratively.* The failure to act collaboratively is a severe leadership failure relating back to the lack of trust.[1]  Fixing these problems is the purpose of our Game Changer Strategy in Collaborative Excellence.

The structure of our modern colleges and universities traces its origins back to Medieval Europe, which was organized as fiefdoms.

Similarly, university departments were orchestrated as specialty entities of learning (we now refer to as "siloes"). Each could function with a certain amount of autonomy, with little or no integration between them.

For example, the sociology department, even though it dealt with people, didn't have to work with the psychology department; nor did the economics department have to work with finance or mathematics, nor history with political science, and so forth.

The structure of academic departments creates myopic straight-jackets for thinking; cross boundary issues, such as trust, teamwork, leadership, entrepreneurship, and collaboration are often either orphaned (with no home in the university) or under that thumb of academics with no real-life experience.

As a result, with a few notable exceptions, universities still act as fiefdoms, with no integration across their fields. Thus an area as important as *leadership* is a motherless child, not fitting into any of the silo structures; thus no center of excellence on this vital issue.

The same "silo" mentality in our undergraduate and graduate programs is turning out people that cannot think critically or integrate across disciplines.

It's virtually unheard of for MBA professors from different disciplines to team-teach their mutual students. This requires them to know the other subject areas and integrate the thinking, and deal with the realities of how different functional interfaces can be either conflictive (adversarial), standoffish (transactional), or synergistic (collaborative.)

Of course, this team teaching is counter to the silo nature of education; it requires an "alliance mentality" and, though tried sporadically, has never caught on.

Corporations are faced with the same problem. Some have been successful in breaking down silos -- they recognize the inherent competitive advantage from collaboration. (Matrix organizations break down silos but leave the organization without anyone responsible except for the project manager who has little control.)

Colleges and universities compete on reputation not on the product that they turn out. Professors have given up any thought of integration by turning over their courses to course designers that simplify the course structure. Assessment of learning is accomplished by into multiple choice, matching questions, etc. that ease the grading burden.  How do you integrate when you regurgitate what you have read or remembered.  Where are the two hour exams filling a couple of "blue books" with coherent thinking on a given subject and perhaps its relationship to other topics.

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[1]  see **White Paper #1 – The Shocking Truth:** *The Massive Failure of Leadership Development*

## #2 What's Wrong: Three Major Flaws in Leadership Development

### Questionable Research

Deans and professors protect their fiefdoms like military sentinels, letting only those inside their castle walls who think like them and are credentialed to their liking. To teach in the university one needs to gain a doctoral degree of some sort, which can only be attained by acting as a research assistant who is utilized to seek information to promote their sponsoring professor's narrow field of interest. Professors rely on their research assistant because the professors are rewarded by how much they publish, not the quality of their insights, nor how much they enlighten and empower students, nor by their breakthroughs in thinking.

Most of their research reports in the field of organization theory end with no conclusion, only a call for further research.[2] In many cases we find the research was stale before it began. Generally, these papers were so abstract as to be "inactionable," the majority of pages of the document should have been relegated to an appendix, and the extensive literature reviews and bibliography are intended to give an "aurora of authenticity" but add little real value and no creative thinking. This is because the audience was other professors (part of the peer review process), not organizational leaders in the field who would actually use the research to do something different.

To compound the matter, many professors, once they gain tenure, lose their competitive edge and are free reign to do as they please; often becoming free riders doing little to move the needle on innovation in their field. It has been our experience this often happens about the time they are "promoted" to chair a department or discipline.[3]

If universities truly intend to attract corporate clients, business leaders, and meet the needs of organizations in the future, many changes must be made. This will take exceptional leadership from deans who have enormous impediments to overcome.[4]

### b.   Bloated Cost Structure

For universities offering Executive Development programs, it's a cash-cow which offsets the unchecked explosion in administrative expenses.

Non-professorial costs in universities have been escalating for fifty years, with no end in sight. Since 1980, the cost of tuition (adjusted for inflation) has tripled at public universities, and doubled at private ones. This is faster than the escalation of medical expenses, which is astronomical. Student loan debt has gone through the roof. Why?

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[2] Having read hundreds of these business and organizational research papers and dozens of doctoral theses, we are struck by four things: a) most of the thinking in these documents is obsolete – business has already moved on, b) the lack of creative or innovative thinking in the research, c) how little concern there is for application of the research work, c) how many research papers reach to no conclusion, ending with the observation "that more research is necessary."

[3] We are not intending to indict all academicians with this statement. Certainly we have experienced many who have been extremely dedicated to their work, often well after they retired. Unfortunately tenure has provided those without the drive to achieve to coast on the winds of mediocrity.

[4] It has been our experience that even deans that come from an industrial background are often overwhelmed by administrative burdens, professors that are "protected" by tenure, or a "flavor of the month" idea from the President who may have little business background and cannot connect with the needs of the business community.

According to the Delta Cost Project Report, in 2010, between 1998 and 2008, America's private colleges increased spending on instruction by about 2.2 percent per year, while spending on administration and staff support increased by 3.6 percent annually, nearly 65% faster than teaching costs. This is called 'administrative bloat," a bureaucracy laden with minions of associates, vice associates, assistant associates, and countless underlings of "deandoms," each justifying their salaries by "complexifying" things -- all of this while not producing a better product, instead wasting it on 'administration".

On the other hand, Executive Education needs relatively little administrative support. However, behind the cloak of academia, executive tuitions are considered a "cash cow" used to offset the bloat.

Corporations must seek/demand better avenues for Executive Education that not only are more cost effective, but also use a better Action-Learning model (see below) that produces more powerful results – providing a better return for one's investment dollar. In the New Paradigm for Executive Education we advocate, adult learning can be very cost effective, but the true measure is the results are achieved in organizations,[5] not just in individuals.

### c. *Inadequate Learning Delivery Models*

**Transformational Expectation Disconnect**
Corporate Leaders expect Executive Development will deliver transformational results, and are deeply disappointed when their expectations are poorly fulfilled.



There are several typical reason for this disappointment:

- Unrealistic Expectations: Executive Education courses are usually very high quality, delivered by very qualified instructors, many of whom have been practitioners during their careers. They deliver a quality education product; which is typically what the students who signed up desired; but the corporate client who paid for the course wanted more than *education*, they wanted *transformation.* Unfortunately the corporate client did not have a clear idea about how to demand transformation, nor did the academic institution know how to deliver it.

- Inappropriate Selection of Attendees: Oftentimes the wrong people are selected to attend. Enrollment of students is the university's objective for a course to proceed. And the more the better – fill the seats, and if necessary add another set of sessions to get a better return on the investment in marketing. Maximizing enrollment matters. However, the university doesn't care that the people selected had no relationship to each other – they weren't part of an implementation team at an organization

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[5] Achieving organizational results requires a different strategy of system integration, which is often impeded by the culture of the organization and the lack of change sponsorship at the highest levels. This set of problems and opportunities are addressed later in this paper and in **White Papers 3 & 4:** *Transformative Action Learning Engagement & Reframing Organization Transformation*

tasked with solving a problem or launching an initiative. Nor did the Executive Education department hook up with the Corporate Sponsor to determine how to maximize value from the program.   (see Flaw #3: Disconnects & Misalignments below for a deeper dive into this issue)

- Poor Program Design: We have observed first-hand how too many graduate and undergraduate professors, when delivering programs to executives, provide an abundance of "knowledge" and a paucity of "wisdom." This is usually the result of two things:

- First, the professor has not been in the real world, facing the day-to-day anguish of running front-line operations. Thus, when they hear a question or expectation or anxiety from those on the front line, the professors lacks the sensitivity or acumen to respond with alacrity. Instead they respond theoretically or academically, which isn't regarded as appropriate or genuine.

- Second, many academics think of Executive Education as "advanced" graduate school, extending their methods of teaching undergraduates and graduate students in the same professorial manner. This means dumping more knowledge into their student's brains. While this might be good for an MBA right out of college with little leadership experience, it makes a poor recipe for the 45 year old rising leader who might be responsible for millions of dollars of budget and a dozen or more business teams.

In **White Paper 3** we address how to fix the problems of inadequate learning delivery models with the framework of **Transformative Action Learning Engagement** – the strategy and implementation of highly effective transformational learning experiences.

Studies show that simply attaining *knowledge does not improve performance*. Adults learn differently than youth — adults value learning when it can be *applied to an immediate problem*, opportunity, or objective, which gives it utility and impact.

### Learning Models -- Pedagogy versus Andragogy

Because university (graduate & doctoral level) education evolved first from delivering undergraduate college degrees, historically the idea of learning was based on the abundance of knowledge available from a professor, who would "teach young students what they didn't (and should) know."

*The greatest myth in training programs is the belief that knowledge alone brings results.*

This legacy learning model (called "pedagogy," which means *child learning*) has hampered Executive Education, and is a severe impediment moving into the future.

The pedagogical model positions the professor as the massive fountain of research-based knowledge. The professor's role is to pour his brain into the student's brains in a logical, sequential manner, thus instructing students in the realms the professor deems important.

When universities decided bolster their Graduate programs by adding Executive Education as part of the life-long learning repertoire, the professorial model was carried along with it. The assumption was that Executive Education was an extension of the Graduate School programs. That assumption was flat wrong.

The Pedagogical (child learning) model has two design flaws:

First, adults learn differently (called andragogy – adult learning[6]) they need a more integrated method of learning that is "Action Oriented" focusing on real problem solving.

Second, because the professors relied on academic research, they often were not up to date with current industry knowledge, new paradigms, major shifts in thinking, and changes in strategy that were necessitated by operational and competitive pressures. We frequently found professorial thinking was five and ten years behind the times.[7]

> See **Appendix One: Six Principles of Adult Learning** for Malcolm Knowles' premises about how adults learn
>
> Note: we have built upon, upgraded, and improved on these Six Principles in White Papers 3, 4, and 5.

After adult learners enter the real world, their learning needs and modes become significantly different. Sadly, the idea of how adults learn -- which is called "andragogy" (adult learning) -- has not been embraced by universities. The major obstacle to making the shift is that it requires a significant retooling and restructuring of education, including how professors are selected, credentialed, and advanced in their careers. The problem runs deep into the heritage of the university. The craft guild hasn't changed for decades or even centuries, why will it change now? Graduate education has yet to create a vision for the future, it is stuck with the same vision. And there is no real impetus or crisis for it to change now.

## *The Rise of the Pracademic*

The harsh reality is that the best teachers of leadership in adult learning environments are actually not professors at all, but "pracademics" – senior leaders who have, in the latter part of their careers, turned to teaching, often combined with writing. They bring more than knowledge; they are

> The typical "pracademic" has a Masters Degree in a professional field, has written extensively (books or articles), has integrated academic learning with practical experience, has had twenty years or more working in their field, and is an excellent coach, facilitator, and teacher.

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[6] Adult and Experiential learning methodologies were codified and pioneered in America over fifty years ago by Malcolm Knowles and David Kolb, who trained this article's primary author in 1973.

[7] There are two notable exceptions: Professors that actively consult -- engaging in "real" business problems – were more likely to bring "good, relevant" knowledge to the classroom, and "Pracademics" – teachers who are (or had been) responsible for front-line operations..

## *#2 What's Wrong: Three Major Flaws in Leadership Development*

living case studies, and are usually committed to empowering others, which is what they did in their careers in business and continue to do in Executive Education.

Pracademics present a serious problem for universities -- it's actually with the university accreditation agencies, which basically only recognize PhD educators. The accreditation agencies provide only a limited space for such creatures Those with significant practical industry knowledge, are looked down upon by accrediting agencies, particularly AACSB. Thus, the accreditation agencies protect their own graduates from AACSB schools regardless of experience.

Many universities are reluctant to enable a pathway for pracademics to gain their doctoral degrees without going through the same pathway as junior graduate candidates. And if the pracademic aspires to achieve their PhD degree, many universities have prohibitions that prevent

Executives and managers rate Leadership Workshops and Programs far more highly if three things are present:

- It was practical and directly applicable to my situation
- I can use the material immediately
- The program leader was knowledgeable, experienced, wise, and responsive

That's why every learning module in our programs follows this Four Stage Capability Building sequence:
1. The *Concept* and overall *Design Architecture* is clear, easily understood, and rapidly communicated to others.
2. A *Best Process & Practice* has been illustrated to bring the concept into a realistic framework
3. A set of "*Tools*" (such as a Checklist, Process Map, Key Factors for Success, etc.) makes the best practice useable in everyday practice.
4. *Whenever possible, attendees are requested to* ***Apply*** *the concept, process, best practice, and tool kit to a real-life situation in order they gain immediate applicability (and consequently the longest retention)*

All our Executive Development Programs ensure these four key elements are employed in the design and presentation of the program delivery. Our programs seamlessly flow these steps so that people learn & apply in one continuous motion – making our capability programs highly successful.

We recognize that much of leadership training cannot be done solely as an academic exercise; it can only be exercised in the heat of a real challenge – in the crucible of action and the tension of emotions.

Our programs focus on integrating frameworks & architectures with success factors, tools, coupled with a heavy dose of application. For this reason, we do not rely heavily on case studies, but instead use the pressure cooker of real life situations, simulations, and interactive co-creation.

doctoral aspirants from teaching. – an unreasonable "catch 22" predicament.[8]

These artifices also become severe obstacles in creating any breakthroughs in thinking about leadership and organizational enlightenment.

If Executive Education is to be delivered by universities in the future, they must correct this deficiency.

> *When adults immediately APPLY what they learn, they retain 80% three weeks later.*
> *When they DON'T APPLY, they've forgotten 80% three weeks later.*[9]

## 3. Flaw #3: Disconnects & Misalignments

Executive Education is not producing results in the field of leadership development is because the learning objectives and methods are out of synch with what's required for action and implementation.

In a recent survey of 1,500 senior managers at 50 different companies, fully three quarters of senior executives were unhappy with the results of their company's learning and development function.[10]
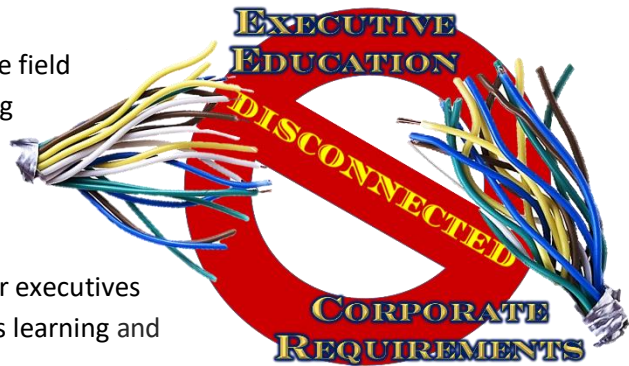
### *Three Misaligned Stakeholders*

Inherently there are *three stakeholders* in the Executive Education Value Chain:

- Executive Education Providers (primarily universities and training companies)
- Individuals Seeking to Upgrade their Capabilities
- Corporations Paying the Bill Expecting Improved Performance

These three stakeholders are not aligned, and there is virtually no attempt to integrate the links between needs, requirements, expectations, and outcomes. This is because the stakeholder relationship is fundamentally *transactional*, where it should be a *collaborative alliance*.

Reading the promotional material for Executive Education, one is struck by messaging primarily aimed at individuals who are expected to sign up for courses. This individualistic motivation is a natural outcome of the historic university tradition of developing individuals. While senior managers generally rate the courses highly, there is very little "stickiness" when evaluated by the impact the newly minted leaders have in the crucible of action. The myopic focus on individual

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[8] The primary author had personal experience with this circular exclusion at three different universities.
[9] Data provided by Xerox Learning Systems c. 1994
[10] Beers, Michael; Finnstrom, Magnus; Schrader, Derek; *The Great Training Robbery*, Harvard Business School Working Paper, 2016

development is the one of the root causes of senior management dissatisfaction with the learning and development process.

> *Reflecting on my experience with Motorola University: they developed courses, taught them to middle managers, and achieved little.*
>
> *Why? Because we learned useful things but we could not apply what we learned since neither the culture nor structure supported the changes. Senior leaders didn't recognize the need to change and did not have the knowledge or skills to make change happen. Their sponsorship should have been gained prior to administering the courses.*
>
> *These misalignments and disconnections resulted in mediocre outcomes. Many managers ended up being more disappointed because they now knew what was possible, but saw no realistic avenue to achieve their vibrant vision.*
>
> – Ronald Steffel, former senior executive, Motorola

Inadvertently the inherent misalignments in most organizations are accentuated and perpetuated, creating greater obstacles to transformational change and making it more difficult for leaders to drive improvements. This heritage of seeing organizations as an *aggregation of personalities* needing competencies is indicative of a long-standing *transactional* thinking about organizations; a mindset still embodied in most HR departments that haven't embraced a systems design architecture for Collaborative Excellence. Often the result is a polarization inside the organization where the newly equipped visionary leaders of change run headlong into a wall of parochially resistant managers that are obstinate because either their power would erode, they fear the outcomes, don't understand the need for change, or are not knowledgeable enough to participate in the change process.

If Executive Education is to fulfill the expectation of senior executives to create transformation, a very different perspective will be needed. One element in the New Paradigm for Executive Education which we advocate is to ensure there is senior sponsorship and middle management support to the ideas of change. (see White Papers 3 & 4 for details)

### *From Skills to Capabilities & Systems Architecture*

The shift requires corporate senior leadership team to join forces with the HR department to orchestrate a process aligning leadership development with individual, team, and organization development. Leadership at all levels must be aligned to the strategic vision. It necessitates more effort than simply signing individual managers to attend competency-oriented training programs. This is a "systems design" approach with clear strategic and operational objectives; the rewards are unquestionably worth the extra effort.

> *Individuals change in a more sustainable, predictable, and logical manner when the teams and organizational systems in their environment change in a coordinated manner with a clear strategic and operational rationale.*

We are advocating a paradigm shift in leadership development with a new systems architecture: a shift in mindsets, skill sets, solution sets, and rewards/metrics required to adapt to the demands of emerging business models in a new networked structure of commerce.

**White Paper #3 New Paradigm – Transformative Action Learning Engagement** examines how to shift the Executive Education strategy and process to create twice the impact at half the cost.

## Conclusions

There is a compelling need for leadership, specifically collaborative leadership. This need will only escalate in the future. There are very deep-rooted dissatisfactions with current leadership development, but few really understand the cause or the solution. Leadership Development has major hurdles if it is to move out of its current paradigm. The Corona Crisis is forcing schools to go online and generating a crisis that will force transformational thinking. Many schools are cutting tuition, holding off construction, and cutting faculty and administrative cots to survive. Unfortunately, you cannot cut your way to profitability, for some it's a death spiral.

*When great intentions yield mediocre results,*

*When the tried-and-true ceases to work,*

*When every attempt to fix things is met with frustration and failure....*

*   Then probably the life-cycle's design has reached its limits,*

*And the paradigm is ready to shift.*

*Opportunity is present, creative vision is called for,*

*And bold action in new dimensions is the nature of things to come......*

Robert Porter Lynch

## #2 What's Wrong: Three Major Flaws in Leadership Development

### Appendix One: Six Principles of Adult Learning

*Adult Learning is Action Learning*

> Note: we have built upon, upgraded, and improved on these Six Principles in White Papers 3, 4, and 5.

Despite the impediments, many pracademics found another path working in corporate training centers where they have used Knowles' Six Principles of Adult Learning:

1. **Why?** Adults need to know the reason for learning something.  Experience can be both an asset and a liability, if prior knowledge is inaccurate, incomplete, or naive, it can interfere with or distort the integration of incoming information. This is particularly true if the cultural experience of the adult learner is inconsistent with the information being delivered.

2. **Application:** Learning needs to be connected to something in their experience. Adults are practical in their approach to learning; they want to know, "How is this going to help me right now? – Is it relevant? Does it meet my targeted goals?" This is where an inconsistency exists if the organizational culture differs from what the student seeks to apply.

3. **People Support What They Help Create:** Adults need to be responsible for their decisions and be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction.  Adults learn through active practice and participation. This helps in integrating component skills into a coherent whole. With the new technologies of artificial Intelligence, business process integration and communication of literally tons of information, the design of the learning must be done in a way that the "big picture" and "simple architectures" shine through the clutter.

4. **Immediacy:** Adults are most interested in learning things that have immediate relevance to their work and/or personal lives. Adults want information that will help them improve their situation. They do not want to be told what to do and they evaluate what helps and what doesn't. They want to choose options based on their individual needs and the meaningful impact a learning engagement could provide. Socialization is more important among adults. Executive education needs to be the catalyst to develop change agents in organizations.

5. **Problem Solving:** Adults want to learn things that will solve a problem or achieve a goal that is important to them. Adults tend to start with a problem and then work to find a solution. A meaningful engagement, such as posing and answering realistic questions and problems is necessary for deeper learning. It will be increasingly important for leaders and managers to see the bigger picture when defining problems and opportunities.

6. **Value:** Adults are motivated by what they perceive as value for themselves, when they can have a role in directing their own learning and have a strong inner and excited motivation to develop a new skill or acquire a particular type of knowledge, this sustains learning. Adults learn by taking responsibility by the value and need of content they must understand and the goals it will achieve. Being in an inviting, collaborative and networking environment as an active participant in the learning process makes it efficient.

The best learning programs are designed to give adults the greatest advantage by being fully immersed in the action-learning loop. A challenge for executive education and even graduate programs is how to immerse students in simulations where they can integrate their learning across disciplines, not in silos as is done today.