

# The ROI of Collaboration



How self-awareness led to teamwork and a 225% improvement in productivity and cost savings

The time employees spend collaborating with each other has grown by 50% over the last two decades to the point where the average individual is left with only 20% of their workday to complete their own tasks. Yet as organizations continue to expand their geographic reach, become flatter and matrixed, and have more ambiguous reporting structures, the need for effective collaboration continues to grow.

Even though companies invest in team-building events that are fun and engaging in the moment and result in shared values, a week later it's not uncommon for everyone to fall back into the same old habits, dysfunctional patterns and blame games. How can you prevent this from happening? How can you ensure that teamwork isn't a fleeting effort but rather a fundamental aspect of your organizational culture?

The key is equipping your leaders with a set of skills that aren't derived from a rule book or agreements made during a ropes course, but instead come from a process of developing individual self-awareness. With clear self-awareness about how individual leaders contribute to team dysfunction, and equipping them with tools to shift the dynamic, leaders are able to move seamlessly from team to team, creating synergy, positivity, and productive collaboration and outcomes.



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In this study, we share *how* a leader development and team coaching program impacted collaboration within one segment of a large national residential construction company that resulted in positive financial outcomes.

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## Research Findings: Communication and Collaboration



### The Challenge of Communication and Collaboration

With fewer than 300 employees, this vibrant and stable residential construction company enjoys a solid brand reputation for being one of the best builders in the Pacific Northwest.

The company maintains a strong culture and spirit of community as a result of employees who bonded together through the housing crisis of 2008-2009. That family-oriented focus has become the number one reason leaders cite for coming to the organization and for staying. Truly, the organization has created an environment where people want to be and want to stay.

Ironically, the family-oriented culture and we're-all-in-this-together attitude were also the very things preventing effective collaboration. The degree to which everyone was allowed input hampered decision-making and made accountability unclear. *In fact, these leaders stated the biggest perceived challenge of the organization was inefficient communication and how that created (in)decisiveness and (lack of) accountability (Figure 1.2).* The net effect for these leaders was an ongoing challenge to balance broad participation with a sense of true collaboration that leads to results.

What did you learn?



I learned that I need to take the step to be engaged and then people will respond positively to that.



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### CHALLENGES

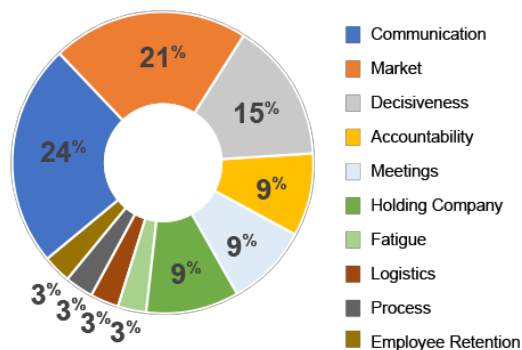


Figure 1.2. Challenges of the organization as reported by the leaders in the program.

# The ROI of Collaboration

## Research Findings: Leader Transformation

### Client Testimonial



One of the most useful professional development courses I have ever taken. The content was informative and the coaching was excellent. If you are willing to fully make the commitment to grow, you will not be disappointed in the results.



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### Leader Transformation

Over a period of six (6) months, HLG implemented a Leadership Development Program. The first session covered five (5) topics, blind spots and stress-based behaviors, self-protective strategies, openness to being known and receiving feedback, gaining insight into how others perceive you as a leader and identifying the leader's core strengths. To aid in learning retention and accommodate for different learning styles, the first day was followed by three short (3) follow-on sessions and four (4) group coaching sessions facilitated by HLG's professional leadership coaches. Group coaching sessions allowed leaders to deepen their learning, bring current challenges to the sessions and develop strong collaborative peer relationships.

Leaders reported the most progress in translating insights gained from the program to the ways they interacted with others. *Leaders reported at least some change in seven (7) of the thirteen (13) areas measured (Table 1.1).*

1. Engaging fully (100%\*)
2. Responding differently when "thrown" (100%)
3. Listening generously (95%)
4. Willingness to be uncomfortable (95%)
5. Building trust with others (95%)
6. Giving feedback (95%)
7. Declaring intentions (95%)

\* = Percent who agree

Table 1.1. Leaders' top seven areas of growth.

More importantly, managers of the leaders reported they observed leaders making the greatest changes in listening generously, willingness to be uncomfortable, engaging fully and supporting and mentoring others. *The ripple effect of leaders implementing these behaviors resulted in improved collaboration as seen by managers (65% agreed) and the leaders themselves (79% agreed).*

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## Research Findings: The ROI

*This study illustrates how companies can improve teamwork and financial performance by investing in programs that develop their leaders, build self-awareness and equip them with the skills needed to effectively collaborate across an organization.*

### Additional HLG Leader Impact Resources:

- Managing Workloads in a Union Environment: How vulnerability and self-awareness paid off in a utilities organization
- Disrupting the Cycle of Work Overload: How increased self-awareness saved time and increased time productivity
- The Ripple Effect of Increased Self-Awareness: How listening and raised self-awareness increased employee engagement

Not only did managers observe leaders being more collaborative, but these changes led to an impact that could be monetized. *Leaders in the program found ways to collaborate more effectively with their teams and across departments leading to improved personal productivity and a time savings of \$122,482.* Other leaders found new ways to work with others creating a profit increase of \$40,000. The overall result was a 225% financial return-on-investment when all costs were taken into consideration (Figure 1.4).

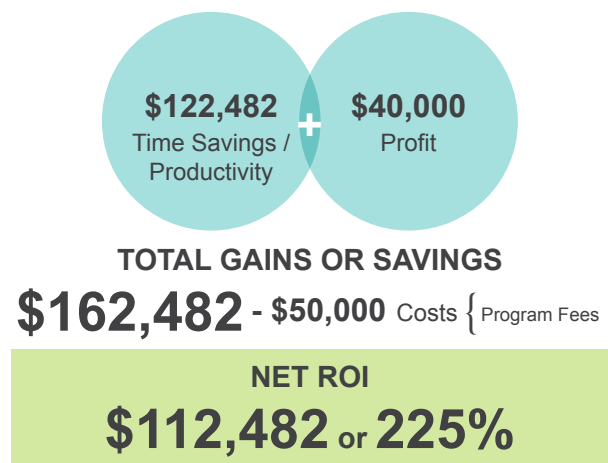


Figure 1.4. Financial impact of the program.

### About Henley Leadership Group

We provide coaching and training that develops leaders, generates innovation and creates happy workplaces.

For over 30 years Henley Leadership Group has been a partner in developing workplaces that energize people to produce extraordinary results.

Henley Leadership Group has supported thousands of leaders committed to bringing their best to work. We believe every workplace deserves healthy and strong leadership that improves the workplace culture and makes work happier.

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