



## ADAPTING THE **BANFF EXPERIENCE** FOR YOUR COMPANY

BY **KATIE DANIEL**

The Banff Centre has earned a solid reputation as one of North America's superior choices for leadership development and personal discovery. Not only does this characterize our relationship with the thousands of individual participants who have taken our programs, but it is also true for the dozens of companies with whom we have worked in partnership to develop custom leadership programs.

These customized programs, crafted in collaboration with company human resources and executive representatives, are designed to align with the client's mission, vision, values, and culture. Leadership Development brings much to the partnership – experienced and dynamic faculty, on-going leadership research, innovative methodologies, and an excellent track record of success.

The experience of some of our custom program partners provides examples of how the relationship might begin, how

a program is tailored to fit specific needs, and the impact on individuals, their companies, and the business in which they operate.

Nadine Johnson, Manager of Learning and Development for Canadian Pacific Railway, describes one way that the relationship can evolve. CPR “developed an internal needs analysis of what leadership development was needed, which led to a request-for-proposal.” The Banff Centre “responded with a proposal that piqued our interest” and a pilot program was drafted for review by senior management. Faculty spent additional intensive development time with CPR, working closely with human resources to flesh out the program, and interviewing senior leaders and potential participants to create meaningful content.

After a pilot and four additional programs, Johnson says that on an individual level, participants are demonstrating “more

reflection, improved communication, a greater appreciation of people, more strategic thinking." The impact on the company is palpable. There is an "increased focus on leadership skills. This has reminded participants and their managers to think beyond technical competence; to differentiate between management and leadership when they consider people for promotions."

Linda Nightingale, Director, Human Resources at The Colt Companies, relates a similar experience. "A lot of time was spent determining what we at Colt were looking for, prior to seeking suppliers. We spoke to The Banff Centre as part of that process, and they became the chosen provider. Following that, senior management spent time determining in more detail which competencies were important within our organization; to determine what we should do to groom the leaders of the future, as well as strengthen and support the people who are leading today. We worked largely with Andre Mamprin at Leadership Development to develop the competency map and design the program that would fit our needs. It was an involved process and certainly time well spent."

Colt has now run eight programs at The Banff Centre. Nightingale says that it has resulted in a variety of changes. "From an individual perspective, some have really stepped up to the plate. And there is certainly a more common language and understanding about what we are trying to achieve as a company. Awareness of the importance of soft skills in leadership development has grown significantly."

One of our newest custom partners is Canadian Natural Resources Limited. Tim Reed, HR Manager, says that because the company was in "an aggressive growth mode for many years," several new supervisor and manager positions were created. Sometimes hired from the outside, sometimes promoted from within, supervisory experience was often "different from the culture we foster at Canadian Natural." To address this, the company began an internal foundation course for front line supervisors. But demand soon outstripped expectations and middle management positions hadn't yet been included. "Following the development of a competency grid which defined competency requirements at three levels of management, we undertook a vendor selection process. The Banff Centre met our requirements."

The company first sent a group of middle and senior managers to Leading and Managing for Results, with a senior executive attending Leading Strategically. "This pilot team returned with rave reviews and recommended immediate implementation for all of our managers and executives." Shortly thereafter, "The Banff Centre ran four custom programs for us over a three-month period, providing a learning experience for over 100 managers and executives."

Reed says that "there seems to be consensus that the program was money well spent. Newer and/or younger managers

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seemed to gain a great deal from course content, while more seasoned managers and senior executives found more value in articulating and reinforcing corporate culture. In the end, though, most felt quite invigorated with new (or renewed) learning on leadership style, motivation, and strategic planning."

Evaluating the process, improving product development, and measuring impact are essential components in our custom work at Leadership Development, and clients report we're on the right track. They tell us of the value we bring to the partnership and the return on investment for the company.

Says Nightingale, "For The Colt Companies, this custom program has been beneficial. But every organization would really have to look at their needs to determine whether a personalized program would be value added for their business. Know your needs before you design the program. For us it was very worthwhile, and well received by all the participants."

Canadian Natural Resources Limited's Tim Reed sums it up: "The Banff Centre has been terrific to work with. They were very accommodating with the customizations we wanted to make and made valuable suggestions along the way. The Centre's staff is very customer-oriented – a real pleasure to deal with. Most importantly, their program leaders did a fabulous job. They were credible, engaging, and readily drew participants into discussions of the modules. The Banff Centre's campus, with its mountain setting and top-notch facilities also lends itself towards this type of program. It worked very well for Canadian Natural, and I would encourage any organization looking at management or executive development programs to talk to The Banff Centre."

The Banff Centre offers our custom partners a very experienced program design team, research-based learning methodologies, and a safe environment for learning with impact. Our step-by-step consultative process adds value to your organization's learning.

To engage in an exploratory conversation about our customized work and potential fit for your organization, please contact Andre N. Mamprin, Director of Leadership Programs, at 403.762.6133 or by e-mail at [andre\\_mamprin@banffcentre.ca](mailto:andre_mamprin@banffcentre.ca).