



## Power of the Lessons of Experience: Enhancing Leadership Development & Internal Mobility

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### Michelle M. Crosby, Ph.D.



- Industrial/Organizational Psychologist & HR Executive with 25+ years of experience
- EVP & CHRO for FRHI Hotels & Resorts - Fairmont, Raffles & Swissôtel – led global reorganization & HR revitalization
- Global SVP & Head of HR and strategist for Starwood's *Building World-Class Brands* initiative
- Consultant for half of career with experience both inside & outside the hospitality industry
- Finalist for 2016 CHRO of the Year
- Extensive public speaking experience at business and industry events
- Co-author of *Service Culture Advantage* in HR Directions (Martha Finney, Ed.) published in 2019



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**Talent**  
**LEADERSHIP**

## A Model of Leadership Development

*Are Leaders Born or Made?*

Talent + Experience = The Right Stuff

From: M.W. McCall, Jr., High Flyers, 1998.

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**Talent**  
**LEADERSHIP**

## Leadership Development

*How Do Leaders Develop?*

Source	Percentage
On-the-Job	70%
People	20%
Courses	10%

Source: Center for Creative Leadership Study

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## What Kinds of Experience?



**Developmental experiences are challenging**

- Stretch the leader beyond their current capability
- Dynamic with problems to solve & choices to make under conditions of risk and uncertainty

*Transformational experiences force people to face something new, different, and oftentimes painful*



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## Lessons of Experience


- **Extensive research has demonstrated the importance of on-the-job experiences**
- **These "Lessons" typically fall under these themes:**
  - Setting and Implementing Agendas
  - Handling Relationships
  - Basic Values
  - Executive Temperament
  - Personal Awareness
- **By understanding the events or experiences that provide these lessons, we can better structure developmental opportunities and growth assignments**

From: McCall, Lombardo & Morrison, Lessons of Experience, 1988.



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## Exercise: Your Lessons of Experience


*When you think about your career as a manager, certain events or experiences probably stand out in your mind – things that led to a lasting change in you as a leader*

- **Think about this question**
- **In groups of 2, share one key event**
- **Remember to include:**
  - What happened?
  - What did you learn from it?
  - How did it have a lasting impact?
- **You have 10 minutes to share your stories and your lessons learned**

From: McCall, Lombardo & Morrison, *Lessons of Experience*, 1988.

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## Characteristics of Developmental Situations


*What was it about the situation that allowed you or forced you to grow from it?*

Edge of my comfort zone  
High stakes  
Proving myself




Opportunity to reflect  
High emotional impact  
Clear expectations of success




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## The Lessons of Experience


Setting the Stage	Leading By Persuasion	Trial by Fire	Learning from Others	Hardships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Early work experience</li> <li>▪ First supervisory job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project / Task Force Assignments</li> <li>▪ Line to staff switches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Start-up operations</li> <li>▪ Business turnarounds</li> <li>▪ Managing a larger scope</li> <li>▪ International assignments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Good Role Models</li> <li>▪ Bad Role Models</li> <li>▪ Values playing out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Career setback</li> <li>▪ Business mistakes</li> <li>▪ Changing jobs</li> <li>▪ Subordinate performance problems</li> <li>▪ Personal trauma</li> </ul>



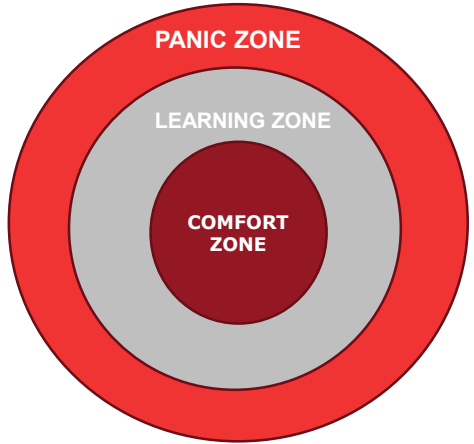
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## True Developmental Experiences Push People Out of Their Comfort Zone






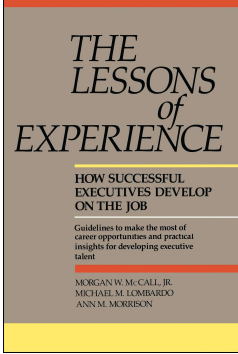
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## So How Can We Leverage the Lessons of Experience Concept?




- Leadership Development
- Talent Management/Succession Planning
- Career Mapping
- Continued Growth and Career Advancement

*Mindset for leaders and HR professionals to think about career as a series of experiences that are building their portfolio and leadership toolkit*




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## Case Study 1: Apprentices Model



- **Build portfolio of skills through different consulting experiences**
- **Project type** – selection, assessment, performance management, 360, surveys, employment litigation support
- **Industry** – manufacturing, retail, utilities, automotive, consumer products, airlines
- **Job Level** – executive, manager, technician, supervisor, front-line
- **Job Type** – general manager, sales, customer service/call center, technician
- **Organizational Size & Type** – Fortune 500 v. mid-cap, public v. private sector



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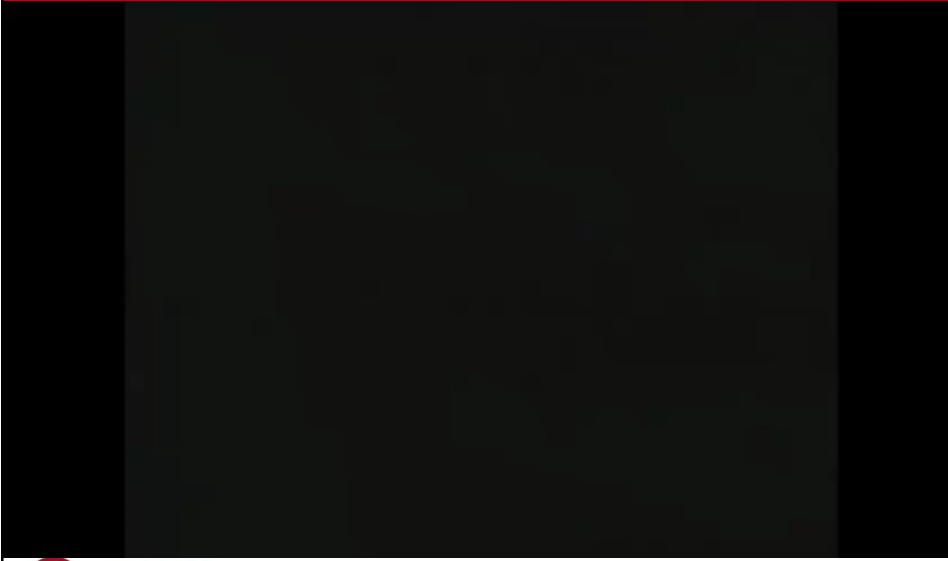


- *Conducted Lessons of Experience Interviews with 100 Senior Leaders*
- *Module in **Leading Starwood** - flagship leadership development program*
- *Explore own Lessons of Experience and learn from other senior leaders – via video and senior executive guest presentations*



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## Case Study 2: Talent Management/ Succession Planning

- **Annual Talent Review process**
  - Review Talent Profile
  - Discuss experiences to date
  - What is needed next to grow and develop to the next level
  - Especially for high potentials or future successors to help get them ready
  
- **Developed "Ready Now" slates for GMs and Department Head by property type**
  - Used for placements throughout the year

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<b>Name:</b> Leslie Dolan		<b>ID#:</b> 00000170	<b>Title:</b> Director of Rooms
<b>Community:</b> North America		<b>Team:</b> Rooms	<b>Location:</b> Sheraton Gateway Atlanta
<b>Level:</b> Property-Level Director		<b>Hire Date:</b> 02/27/1993	<b>Reports to:</b> Evelyn Castano

Educational Background			
Year	Degree	School or University	Major if applicable
1990	4-Year University Degree (eg Bachelors)	Cornell Hotel School	Hotel & Restaurant Management
1987	2-Year College Degree (eg Associate)	Hudson Valley Community College	General Studies
1985	High School/Basic Degree (or equivalent)	Shaker High School	


Career History			
Time Period	Title	Company	Location/Property/Site
10/1999 - to present	Director of Rooms	Starwood Hotels and Resorts	Sheraton Gateway Hotel Atlanta Airport
03/1996 - 10/1999	Front Office Manager	Starwood Hotels and Resorts	Sheraton South Portland Hotel
02/1995 - 03/1996	Asst. Front Office Manager	Starwood Hotels and Resorts	Sheraton South Portland Hotel
02/1993 - 02/1995	Front Desk Manager	Starwood Hotels and Resorts	Sheraton South Portland Hotel
06/1990 - 12/1992	Assistant Front Office Manager	Hilton Hotels Corporation	Hampton Inn Nashua

Starwood Certificates / Secondary Roles				Languages Known			
Year	Category	Subcategory	Exp.	Language	Proficiency	Language	Proficiency
2003	Behavioral Interviewing	Certified Interviewer		English	Fluent	Spanish	Passable

Certifications and Licenses			Other Accomplishments, Awards and Honors		
Year	Certificate/License	School or Organization	Year	Award or Honor	Organization
2001	Six Sigma Master Black Belt	Starwood	1996	Best Financial Performance	Starwood


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## STARWOOD

Talent Review




Performance History				2003 Leadership Success Profile Results					
Year	Big 5	Leadership Profile	Overall						
2001	A	B+	B+	Build Personal Effectiveness	E	Build Competitive Advantage	E		
2002	O	E	E	Act with Integrity	M	Create Strategic Alignment	M		
2003	E	E	E	Communicate Effectively	M	Demonstrate Financial Acumen	M		
				Exhibit Self-Confidence	E	Drive Business Results	E		
				Make Sound Decisions	E	Forster Customer Focus	E		
				Total:	E	Total:	E		
2003 Big 5 Objectives and Results				2004 Individual Development Plan					
Objective	Weight	Rating							
Increase GSI Scores	20 %	M							
ASI Scores	25 %	M							
Financials	25 %	E							
Six Sigma	10 %	E							
Development of Others	20 %	E							
Overall Big 5 Rating:									
2004 Individual Development Plan				2003 Leadership Success Profile Results					
Competency Area	Developmental Need	Action Plan							
Demonstrate Functional Excellence	Work on improving your skill around the Rooms Division, particularly in the area of the Front Desk. Brush up on the StarLink system and become the expert on MARS.	Partner with Estelle at the Sheraton and have her share her expertise with you. Whenever possible, Spend time at the Front Desk assisting with check-in.							
Exhibit Self-Confidence	You seem very tentative when you are asked to take a stand on an issue. Make decisions with authority and conviction, particularly at our weekly team meetings.	Participate in this Summer's "Developing your Personal Impact and Influence" course. Use me as A sounding board for your ideas before meetings.							
Communicate Effectively	Try to express yourself more clearly, to prevent misunderstandings like with Phillippe last summer. Be sure that your messages are properly understood.	Don't communicate important points via phone only; Follow up with e-mails to avoid confusion. Don't be afraid to 'cc' me on important e-mail interactions.							

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## STARWOOD

Talent Review



360-Degree Feedback Results					2003 360-Degree Feedback Highest Rated Behaviors		
	Ineffective	Effective	Highly Effective	Average Rating	Competency	Behavior	Rating
				2003 2002			
<b>Build Personal Effectiveness</b>							
Act with Integrity				4.4 4.4	Act with Integrity	Manages in the best interest of the business rather than personal gain	4.5
Communicate Effectively				4.1 4.2	Demonstrate Financial Acumen	Analyzes and communicates business and financial data for planning and decision-making	4.5
Exhibit Self-Confidence				4.0 4.0	Drive Business Results	Delivers financial results while achieving both customer and associate satisfaction	4.5
Make Sound Decisions				4.3 4.2	Demonstrate Functional Excellence	Demonstrates functional excellence in current jobs/role for effective performance	4.5
Overall				4.2 4.2	Motivate & Inspire Others	Inspires others to reach their full potential	4.5
<b>Create Team Focus</b>							
Build Relationships				4.2 4.2			
Facilitate Open Communication				4.0 3.9			
Foster Teamwork				4.3 4.1			
Promote Team Diversity				4.2 4.2			
Overall				4.2 4.1			
<b>Lead People Development</b>							
Attract, Develop & Retain Talent				4.3 4.1			
Inspire Trust				4.0 4.0			
Lead by Example				4.3 4.4			
Champion Organizational Learning				4.3 4.0			
Overall				4.3 4.1			
<b>Build Competitive Advantage</b>							
Create Strategic Alignment				4.4 4.4			
Demonstrate Financial Acumen				4.4 4.5			
Drive Business Results				4.5 4.3			
Forster Customer Focus				4.3 4.4			
Overall				4.4 4.3			
<b>Create a High Performance Culture</b>							
Demonstrate Functional Excellence				4.3 4.3			
Execute Effectively				4.2 4.2			
Motivate & Inspire Others				4.3 4.0			
Take Ownership				4.3 4.5			
Overall				4.3 4.2			
<b>Lead Change and Innovation</b>							
Build Support for Change				4.2 4.2			
Drive Continuous Improvement				4.2 4.2			
Leverage Technology				3.8 3.9			
Share Best Practices				4.0 4.2			
Overall				4.0 4.1			


2003 360-Degree Feedback Lowest Rated Behaviors		
Competency	Behavior	Rating
Exhibit Self-Confidence	Handles criticism constructively with poise and self-assurance	3.7
Exhibit Self-Confidence	Maintains composure and professionalism in difficult or high stress situations	3.8
Leverage Technology	Effectively uses and promotes technology to support productivity, profitability, and change	3.8
Leverage Technology	Optimizes the use of technology to provide new or better services for customers	3.8
Leverage Technology	Shares technological knowledge with others	3.8

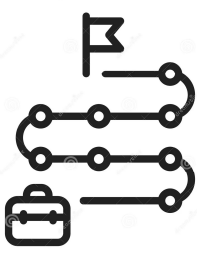
Recent Training Completed		
Completed	Topics	Status
07/27/2012	Six Sigma - Introduction to Innovation Transfer	Complete
07/27/2012	Six Sigma - Your Field Guide	Complete

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## Example: Using the Lessons to Build a General Manager's Career Path



- **Review career history to date and build out next steps**
  - **Department experience** – rooms, F&B, sales, finance, HR
  - **Size of hotel** – number of rooms
  - **Type of hotel** – resort, convention, downtown, suburban, airport
  - **Union v. Non-union**
  - **Region** – domestic v. international experience
  - **New build, opening, turnaround, taskforce**



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## Case Study 3: Multi-Level Leadership Development







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## THE OPPORTUNITY



**CAMPUS**  
How do we attract the best and brightest from leading schools?

**INTERNAL**  
How do we better identify and develop our top internal talent?

**COMPETITION**  
How do we attract proven talent from competitors?

**DEVELOPMENT**  
How do we focus attention and investment on those most likely to succeed?



ONE JOURNEY. MANY PATHS. UNLIMITED EXPERIENCES.

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**ONE JOURNEY. MANY PATHS. UNLIMITED EXPERIENCES.**

ASPIRING LEADER



**UNDERSTAND SERVICE**  
Achieve a deep understanding of the meaning of service excellence through immersion into hospitality operations at FRHI Hotels & Resorts. Understand FRH's unique brand service cultures.

HIGH POTENTIAL LEADER



**UNDERSTAND SELF**  
Discover your personal service and leadership style, passion, and career goals through hands-on experience, and cross-department interaction while working alongside industry leaders.

FUTURE EXECUTIVE



**LEAD YOUR TEAM**  
Select, engage and recognize your team to work together to deliver the optimal guest experience and achieve team goals.

BUILD EXPERTISE



**LEAD YOUR BUSINESS**  
Create success by delivering consistent results across all pillars of our business: Colleagues, Guests, and Owners.

BUILD EXPERTISE



**BUILD EXPERTISE**  
Drive performance and innovation by applying mastery in your craft across various environments. Differentiate FRHI Hotels & Resorts from the competition.

RAFFLES *Fairmont* swissôtel

FRHI

HOTELS & RESORTS



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**Progress Maps: Development Plan**

**Peer Ambassador & Mentors**

**SUMMIT Speaker Series**

**SUMMIT Talk**

**Senior Leader Exclusives**

**Career Concierge**

PROGRESS MAP: ASPIRING LEADER

**SUMMIT ASPIRING LEADER: PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE CHECKLIST**

SUMMIT Aspiring Leader candidates demonstrate the behaviors listed below and have completed the Practical Experience requirements listed below in order to be considered for the next tier of SUMMIT Leadership Development

ID	PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE	COMPLETE
1	Has completed all 100 hours of training	0
2	Has attended all required department training	0
3	Has completed the training for the program (not restricted to Public Safety, Finance, O&M, Support, Tech, Logistics)	0
4	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
5	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
6	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
7	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
8	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
9	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
10	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
11	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
12	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
13	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
14	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
15	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
16	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
17	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
18	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0
19	Has completed all 100 hours of training for the program (not restricted to ME, T&E)	0

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**Video Talent Profile**

**Cross-training Opportunities**

**Hotel Projects & Taskforces**

**Committee Involvement**

**Priority Access to Training Programs**

**SHL Developmental Assessments**

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THINK  
LEADERSHIP  
GROW

## So How Can We Leverage the Lessons of Experience Concept?

**THE LESSONS of EXPERIENCE**

HOW SUCCESSFUL EXECUTIVES DEVELOP ON THE JOB

Guidelines to make the most of career opportunities and practical insights for developing executive talent

MORGAN W. M. CALL, JR.  
MICHAEL M. LOMBARDO  
ANN M. MCGREGOR

- Leadership Development
- Talent Management/Succession Planning
- Career Mapping
- Continued Growth and Career Advancement

*Mindset for leaders and HR professionals to think about career as a series of experiences that are building their portfolio and personal toolkit*

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